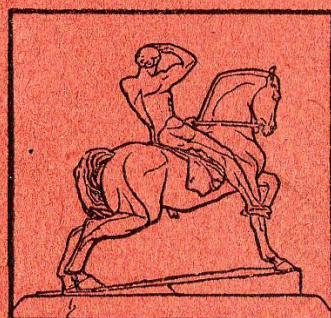


THE SECOND AND THIRD INTERNATIONALS AND THE VIENNA UNION

*Official Report of the Conference between
the Executives, held at the Reichstag,
Berlin, on the 2nd April, 1922, and
following days*



1922

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THE SECOND & THIRD INTERNATIONALS
AND
THE VIENNA UNION

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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

General Session of the Executive Committees
of the three International Organisations.

FIRST DAY.

*Sunday, the 2nd of April, 1922, 11.45 a.m., in the
Reichstag, Berlin, Room 25.*

President : FRIEDRICH ADLER (Austria).

FRIEDRICH ADLER.

Adler, opening the Meeting at 11.45, said :—
Comrades, the Meeting is open.

Before we begin the Conference there are one or two technical details to deal with. The representatives of the three Executives met yesterday and to-day to come to an agreement over them. They have agreed that each of the three Executives shall be allowed ten delegates, who shall have the right to vote. In addition all members of the Executives shall be admitted as guests.

After some discussion, it has been decided further that the general press is to be admitted to the present session.

I have further to announce that it has been decided not to admit any parties to the Conference which are not affiliated to one of the three Executives, with the single exception of the Italian Party, for the practical reason that it has been suggested on many sides that

the proposed International Conference should take place in Italy. The Italian Party then will have the right to one representative, who shall take part in the debates, and two representatives as guests, like the other members of the Executives.

I also have to tell you that the Presidency has been arranged so that each of the three Executives shall nominate one comrade. The Second International has nominated Comrade Tom Shaw; the Third, Comrade Clara Zetkin, and the International Working Union has nominated me. These three comrades, therefore, will conduct the proceedings.

LIST OF DELEGATES.

The Delegates present are:—

SECOND INTERNATIONAL:—

As Delegates: Camille Huysmans, Emile Vandervelde (Belgium); Stauning (Denmark); Otto Wels (Germany); Harry Gosling, Ramsay MacDonald, Tom Shaw (England); Tseretelli (Georgia); W. N. Vliegen (Holland); Gustav Moeller (Sweden).

As Guests: Henri de Man (Belgium); Adolf Braun, Dr. Lüttkens, Viktor Schiff (Germany); E. Bevin, Marguerite Cox, William Gillies (England).

INTERNATIONAL WORKING UNION OF SOCIALIST PARTIES:—

As Delegates: Arthur Crispin (Germany); R. C. Wallhead (England); Paul Faure, Jean Longuet (France); Bruno Kalnin (Letland); Friedrich Adler, Otter Bauer (Austria); Julius Martov (Russia); Robert Grimm (Switzerland); Karl Cernak (Czecho-Slovakia).

As Guests: Wilhelm Dittman (Germany); Alexander Bracke, Compère-Morel (France); B. Locker, S. Kaplan (Poale-Zion); R. Abramovitch, Alexander Schreider (Russia).

THIRD INTERNATIONAL:—

As Delegates: Klara Zetkin (Germany); L. O.

Frossard, Rosmer (France); Katayama (Japan); Sjojanowits (Jugo-Slavia); Warski (Poland); N. Bucharin, Karl Radek (Russia); Bohumil-Smeral (Czecho-Slovakia).

As Guests: Bujanowicz, Vujovits (Jugo-Slavia).

FROM THE ITALIAN SOCIALIST PARTY:—

Representative who may take part in the Debates: Serrati.

As Guests: Adelchi Baratonio; Domenico Fioritto.

Comrades! The Conference which is meeting to-day is an experiment. It is an attempt to come to an agreement, an understanding within very definite limits; no one present here will entertain any illusions about the extent of those limits. We have summoned this Conference in the belief that the time has come when it is possible to make this experiment. Whether this experiment will succeed, experience will show us. But the mere fact that the Conference has met, which a short time ago would have seemed an impossibility, is already a measure of success. The outcome can only be shown by the results of the Conference.

DIFFERENCES.

We of the International Working Union of Socialist Parties have undertaken this experiment with the knowledge that the position of the world proletariat is such that it is imperative, in spite of all differences which may exist, to make an attempt to unite its strength for certain concrete purposes and actions. We have no illusions, we know that each of the three groups present here entered this Conference with considerable reservations, that they will bring forward these reservations, and I may say in my opening address that we too, who have initiated this Conference, will explain through our representative, Paul Faure, in a short declaration, our views with regard to the conference, what difficulties we see in the way, and what reservations we have to

make. Each of the three sides will give some such expression of their views.

We understand from the outset that unity for certain definite action cannot be obtained by glossing over the differences which exist between us; nor can it be begotten of an apparent harmony and unity, but by the clear recognition of the inevitable differences which exist amongst the world proletariat at the present time. In spite of these differences an attempt can be made to lead the way towards common action within definite limits.

NO FUSION.

I would like at once to make one point clear, which all of us who follow the course of events will understand, that it is no part of our present task to try to bring about any fusion of the three International organisations represented here, or to concern ourselves in any way with such questions of organisation. We do not know whether that will be possible in some more distant future. We all realise, I think, that the present difficulties amongst the proletariat make a common organisation impossible; but perhaps—and this is the aim of this Conference—certain common action can be reached.

We also realise that the three organisations which have met together here, fully conscious of the difficulties, have met for the purpose, not of establishing unity of organisation, but of considering whether it is possible to come to action.

NEED OF UNITED ACTION.

I think that all of us here feel that common action on the part of the proletariat has never been more urgent than at the present time. However powerful the differences between us may be, however much we may feel those differences day by day and be compelled day by day to oppose comrades of one section or another, still we know that above all these differences, and

stronger than any petty differences, the incredible distress of the world proletariat which is the outcome of the world war—the terrible conditions of misery caused by depreciation of currency and economic need on the one hand, and increased unemployment in the lands with a high currency on the other hand—this urgent need of the world proletariat has produced amongst them, side by side with their interest in theoretical questions, an imperative desire for unity of action in the immediate tasks of the day.

GENOA.

I think I may say that the chief reason which has brought us together and decided this date for the Conference is that the International of capitalist imperialism is now gathering for a conference in Genoa, the possibilities of which we view with great scepticism. There an attempt is to be made, on one hand to impose heavy new burdens upon the proletariat of all countries, on the other hand to threaten new warlike developments.

In opposition to this Genoa Conference and the dangers involved in it, we have all said, and all the three Executives have said it with the same emphasis, that an attempt must be made to see whether it may be possible to set up against this tide of capitalist reaction a united band of proletarian Parties representative of different tendencies to carry out common action on specific points.

COMMON ACTION.

I think, therefore, we must be quite clear about this point from the beginning: *we do not want a common organisation. We are working for common action.* Common action, however, is only possible under certain conditions. The intention of the Conference which we have summoned here to-day is to explore those conditions for common action. For it is very easy to say: We want common action. Common action means

a common watchword, agreement upon the right time for action, agreement upon the means to be used to carry out that action. However fine the appeal to common action may sound, it can only be made possible if we are able to come to an agreement upon these problems. Comrades, we who have lived through the struggle together know well enough that an army like the proletarian army will be in the worst possible position to-day if it is led towards common action by people who are not able to discuss this action amongst themselves. This is the meaning of the Conference, *that it provides the opportunity for creating conditions necessary for common action.*

REFORMISM AND REVOLUTION.

Comrades, we who have called this Conference know perfectly well the differences which exist between the representatives meeting in this hall. These differences can be expressed more or less aggressively, with a more or less clear understanding. To-day when we are beginning our discussions, I would like to express them by saying that the main question in the great struggle between Reformism and Revolution is: should we lay the chief emphasis on the struggle of to-day or of to-morrow? Amongst men of good will there are those who keep their eyes fixed on to-day and those who turn their glance towards the future. The differences lie in the historical perspective of these two groups; they turn upon the question, when will this to-morrow be? In our battle-song, the song common to all of us, we sing:

“Close the ranks and to-morrow the International will unite the human race.”

When will this to-morrow come, when will the great day which is to end the struggle come?—that is the question which divides us. This affects our actions, and the farther away this to-morrow appears the more urgently will certain Parties try to direct their policy towards the problems of to-day. But, however different

our perspective of to-morrow may be, we can still say that although we who meet here as comrades are divided as to whether the fight is to be for to-day or to-morrow, yet we have this in common, *that we all want to fight.*

CONDITIONS.

Therefore, comrades, we have explained clearly to you in the proposals we sent you, and which you have accepted in principle, that the general Conference which is the subject of our present discussions will be founded on the basis that all who come may come with different points of view, but they will all be fighting for the proletariat. We have, therefore, set forth as the conditions for future action:

“All proletarian Parties will be admitted who stand on the ground of the class struggle, whose goal is to overthrow capitalism and who recognise the necessity for common international action on the part of the proletariat for the attainment of this goal.”

This statement gives the conditions under which we can come together. Only on the basis that all who are here are prepared to fight on behalf of the proletariat, according to their own historical perspective, can we work together.

We know all the questions of historical perspective that must divide us when the great struggle comes; but we believe that apart from all the questions which divide us as to the future, the whole world proletariat recognises the fact that the needs of the moment compel us to action, *to fight for to-day.* And if it is possible to find within certain limits a platform for the struggle of the immediate present, a struggle imposed upon us by the immediate needs of the day, this in itself will be a result at which the whole world proletariat will rejoice.

This is the spirit in which we have called the Conference. We will discuss the problems, the difficulties and obstacles, which lie before us all. We can only reach a platform for common action by overcoming

obstacles. We will not be dismayed if at first, if we deal honestly, differences manifest themselves. We think that on the ground of these differences and in spite of these differences a common struggle on the part of the international proletariat can be waged for certain concrete ends.

In this spirit, comrades, I greet all those who are present at this Conference, conscious of the great tasks which lie before us, conscious of our responsibility before the international proletariat if we wreck this experiment, conscious of the fact that we must all try to advance a few steps together. I therefore greet you in the name of our organisation and declare the meeting open.

STATEMENT BY THIRD INTERNATIONAL.

Clara Zetkin then read the following statement on behalf of the delegation of the Third International:—

CLARA ZETKIN.

At the commencement of the deliberations with representatives of the Executive Committees of the Second International and the International Working Union of Socialist Parties the delegation of the Communist International thinks it incumbent upon itself to make the following declaration:—

WHY DISUNITY?

It is the first time since the last session of the International Socialist Bureau in July, 1914, in Brussels, which was followed by the world war and the collapse of the Second International, that representatives of all sections of the International Labour Movement, which was once a homogeneous international unit, sit down for joint conference. This cannot be allowed to pass unnoticed without our placing on record before the international proletariat the fact to which the present disunity of the working class is due, viz., that various strata of the working class entered into a temporary

community of interests with the imperialist states, a fact which has been expressed in the anti-revolutionary position of many parties and organisations of the working class. Until labour bands together in a common struggle for its interests against international capital, until labour breaks with the policy of coalition with capital, until labour rises to the fight for political power, there will always be the disunity within its ranks which is one of the principal sources of capital's strength. No lamentations (nor oaths) can alter this fact. And because the working class has not as yet summoned sufficient energy for this struggle, because it has not yet learned in this struggle that capitalism can only be overcome when the great majority of the proletariat seizes power in revolutionary battle and establishes the dictatorship of the working people, we declare that the organic unity of the present international organisations of the proletariat, differing as to orientation in principle, is entirely utopian and injurious. But this opinion does not hinder us from realising that the whole world situation urgently demands that the working class, in spite of all the profound differences cleaving it, must unite for a defensive struggle against the offensive of world capital.

THE MISSED CHANCE.

After the end of the war, the armed and aroused working masses returned home in order to learn that the Democracy and the welfare of the peoples, for which they had been told they were shedding their blood, were nothing but capitalist lies designed to conceal and veil the fact that the war was a struggle for the profit interests of Capital. It was then possible to overwhelm the capitalist world. But the indecision of the masses of the working class, the democratic illusions which were spread among them and had been methodically fed by the reformist parties, and the open and concealed coalition of the latter with the bourgeoisie prevented the majority of the working class from following the glorious

example of the Russian October Revolution. Instead of that they helped world capital to repel the first attack of the proletariat. The working masses of the whole world can now feel the effects of this policy on their own bodies. The international bourgeoisie is incapable of setting the world in order even upon the basis of the capitalist system, is incapable of assuring the proletariat even the pre-war standard of living. The Capitalist world, shaken to its deepest foundations, has, none the less, strength enough to attempt to shift upon the proletariat the costs of the war.

THE BOURGEOIS OFFENSIVE.

The world bourgeoisie has not yet given up hope of obtaining a large part of the costs of the war by increasing the exploitation of the German proletariat by means of reparations burdens, and of the entire Russian people by means of the peaceful penetration of Soviet Russia which they were not able to overthrow by military force; by means of the exploitation of the newly-created states which are being employed as tools of the militarist and imperialist policy of the great Powers; by means of the increased exploitation and suppression of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples (China, Persia and Turkey). But even the circles of the international bourgeoisie who have not realised that it is of no avail to attempt to extort hundreds of millions from the exhausted masses of the defeated countries of Soviet Russia and the colonies, even they understand that—even if they would be able to do it—this tremendous pillage would not be sufficient to obtain the funds necessary for capitalist reconstruction. Therefore the bourgeoisie is taking up an offensive against the working class all over the world. Therefore it is attempting to lengthen the working hours of labour in spite of unemployment; therefore it is attempting to cut wages. The international working class is to cover all the costs of the war, and more than that, furnish the means for the strengthening of the capitalistic world system.

This situation places the international working class before momentous decisions. It will either now unite for the defensive struggle against all the attacks of international capital, it will either proceed unitedly against the attempts at the economic pillage of the defeated countries, of Soviet Russia and the Colonies, as well as against the wave of lock-outs, it will either arise for the struggle for the abolition of the Treaty of Versailles, for the recognition of Soviet Russia and its economic reconstruction, for the control of production in all countries, or it will pay with its blood and health for the cost of the peace as it had to pay for the war.

THE UNITED FRONT.

The Communist International demands of the working masses that they unite for the struggle against the present offensive of capital, and that they carry on that struggle in the most energetic manner without consideration as to their differences of opinion upon the way leading to the final victory and the means of assuring this way. The Communist International has, therefore, proclaimed the slogan of the united proletarian front for the struggle against the bourgeoisie, and welcomed the proposal of the Vienna Working Union for the convocation of an International Labour Congress. It considers this proposed International Labour Congress a means for the uniting of the coming labour struggles.

THE CONFERENCE.

In order that this congress be a success the Communist International proposes that all proletarian trade-union organisations be invited. The trade-unions contain the majority of the proletariat. They comprise this majority without consideration of political differences. They have the working masses in their daily needs and struggles. If the International Labour Congress is to be no empty demonstration, but is to unite the international action of the proletariat, the trade-unions must participate in it. The splitting of

the leading organisations of the proletariat, and even of its mass organisations in various countries, is no reason against the invitation of the trade-unions, but on the contrary is exactly why they should be invited. For just because the trade-unions are grouping themselves around two centres an agreement as to action is necessary. We move the invitation of the Amsterdam Trade Union International and the Red Trade Union International, as well as the independent syndicalist organisations, the American Federation of Labour, and various other independent unions.

As for the proletarian parties, we propose that those parties and party groups, outside of the international organisations, be invited alongside of representatives of the parties affiliated to the three International Executives. In this connection the most important are the anarchist and syndicalist organisations. They are not great in numbers, but they contain certain sincere revolutionary proletarian elements, who must be enrolled in the general battle front of the working class. Very sharp differences separate us from these groups. We held it to be our duty to attempt to come to an agreement with them in questions of action, and at the instant where the situation makes it necessary even to come to an agreement with the reformist parties whose policy, directed against the interests of the working class, is the source of the errors of these Left elements.

DEFEND RUSSIA.

We consider the convocation of the International Labour Conference absolutely necessary. The Genoa Conference represents an attempt of world capital to commence a new partition of the world, a new capitalist world order after the collapse of the Versailles policy on the hard rocks of fact. The international working class was undecided and incompetent of action during the Versailles Conference. Only Soviet Russia fought with arms in hand against the attempt of Entente capital to enslave the entire world

To-day, after three years of capitalist chaos, of continuing capitalist decay, Soviet Russia stands unshaken and victorious. It is, however, the object of powerful, so-called "peaceful" attacks of world capital. The first state which was created by the first wave of the world revolution must be aided against the attempts to coerce its social capitulation. The German proletariat has become the reducer of the wages of the proletariat of the world, thanks to the complete capitulation of the German bourgeoisie before the Entente in spite of the workers' resistance. The struggle against the reparations policy of the Allies is a battle for the living standard for the working masses in the Entente countries and America. If the international proletariat does not exert all its energy against the Treaty of Versailles, the attempts at the economic strangulation of Soviet Russia, the exploitation of the colonies and of the population in the newly created small states, the elimination of unemployment and of the world economic crisis is absolutely out of the question. The international working class must therefore raise its voice even during the Genoa Conference. It must attempt to compel the Genoa Conference, whose task is allegedly the reconstruction of world economies, to deal with the labour question, with unemployment and the eight-hour day. Not as in Versailles, where the representatives of various labour organisations, behind whom were struggling masses, stood hand in hand before the Entente and asked it to consider the interest of the proletariat, the international representatives of the working class must demand an account from the representatives of world capital, assembled in Genoa, for their promises broken shamelessly.

REFORMISM AND COMMUNISTS.

The delegation of the Communist International is ready to do all in its power for the united struggle of the international proletariat, without concealing for a

moment what separates it from the reformist and semi-reformist parties. It can do that all the more easily because it is convinced that each day of struggle and each experience will hammer into the proletariat of all countries that no compromise with capital is able to assure the world peace and the proletariat a human existence, but that a victory of the proletariat is necessary to assure this. It must take the establishment and order of the world in its strong victorious hands, in order to rebuild it, in accordance with the interests of the overwhelming majority of humanity.

The delegation of the Communist International moved by all these considerations, propose that the International Conference only deal with such question as concern the immediate practical united action of the working masses, questions which do not divide it, but unite it. The delegation of the Communist International therefore propose the following order of business for the International Conference:—

1. Defence against the capitalist offensive.
2. Struggle against reaction.
3. The preparation of the fight against new imperialist wars.
4. Assistance in the reconstruction of the Russian Soviet Republic.
5. The Treaty of Versailles and the reconstruction of the devastated regions.

THE DELEGATION OF THE EXECUTIVE OF THE
COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

Berlin, April 2nd, 1922.

ADJOURNMENT.

ADLER: It was originally intended by the Managing Committee to adjourn the session for three hours because we expected that all three declarations would then have been made. Now we must adjourn, but only until 3 o'clock. At 3 o'clock Comrade Vandervelde will speak, and then Comrade Paul Faure, and then the meeting will probably be adjourned until the morning to give the Committee an opportunity of making further arrangements. The session is ended. (1.40 p.m.)

Sunday, the 2nd of April, 1922.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

President: TOM SHAW (England).

EMILE VANDERVELDE.

Comrades! it is not my intention to reply, point by point, to the declaration made this morning in the name of the Executive Committee of the Third International. I am to speak in the name of the Executive Committee of the Second International, and not in my own name. Therefore I will resist the temptation to discussion and polemics. I need not add that I should have very definite and explicit reservations to make on the theses which have been presented, and even on the practical resolutions which have been suggested.

For example, it has been suggested that we should unite in conference to discuss means for relieving the proletariat in certain countries of the burden of reparations imposed upon them by the Treaty of Versailles. I have no doubt that such suggestions would please the German proletariat, and give some satisfaction to Mr. Stinnes, but I am not so sure that such suggestions would be received as favourably by the proletariat of the countries which have suffered the most serious injuries.

But, I repeat, I have no intention of entering into discussions and polemics. I am now speaking in the name of the Second International.

A GENERAL CONFERENCE.

We will not reply to a declaration by a declaration. The first reason for this is that we have already

explained our attitude to our comrades of the Vienna Union in the declaration made at Frankfort. The second reason, and the more important, is that we do not want to bind ourselves by an affirmative or negative declaration upon the subject of the general Conference. The exchange of views about to take place will show us whether this Conference is actually possible or impossible. But there is one point upon which we are in agreement with our Vienna friends, and also with the delegates of the Third International, namely, that it would be desirable if the Socialist proletariat could organise to defend itself against capitalist reaction.

The motives for this have been clearly indicated by the declaration of Vienna and by that of the Third International.

Europe is now living under the standard of reaction; reaction on the part of the employers, who are preparing an offensive against wages and short hours of labour; monarchic reaction, which has almost reached its goal in Hungary, and which is threatening everywhere the conquests in the domain of political power made after the war; and finally, perhaps the most serious, militarist reaction, which after the recent world catastrophe is now preparing fresh catastrophes.

DANGERS FROM CAPITALISM.

I ought to add, citizens, that in my opinion there is another danger to be considered. Capitalism divided against itself is threatening to drag us into the abysses of war, but a kind of relative reconciliation between the different capitalisms would be no less a danger to Socialists. We have two things to fear; either that capitalists will be seized by the madness which lead them into the abyss, or that they will become reasonable, will try to come to an agreement and organise a vast consortium for the exploitation of the world, and primarily for the exploitation of Russia. And these are not dangers that we can afford to take lightly. The are attempts actually showing themselves in ever

country, whose aim is the organisation of a capitalist hegemony throughout the world, under the direction andegis of that capitalism which is at once the most powerful, the most brutal, the most cynical—American capitalism.

A UNITED FRONT.

Faced with such dangers, it is inevitable that we should all, because we are Socialists, try to organise ourselves to form a united defensive front, to bring into being amongst ourselves a certain unity of action. Certainly, there can be no question at this moment of recreating the international Socialist unity which existed, or which seemed to exist, before the war. The objective which our Vienna comrades had in view when summoning this Conference is in reality much more modest. It is a question of bringing together in a general Conference not only all the proletarian Parties, but also—and, I notice, no reference was made to this interesting point in this morning's declaration—the Trade Union organisations, including the Trade Union International, which only yesterday was being called the Yellow International. All the political and revolutionary forces of the proletariat are to be brought together to discuss a definite programme and to try to come to an agreement upon a basis for common action.

ACTION ALREADY TAKEN.

In reply to these suggestions, I would like to say at the outset that we raise no objections in principle. Such an attempt is not entirely new since the days of the war. On several occasions we have all united for common action, even without a preliminary agreement. Perhaps I may be allowed to recall, for instance, that two years ago, when the Polish Government abruptly broke off its negotiations with the Soviets and the Polish armies marched upon Kiev, an effort towards peace was made by the whole proletariat of Europe, and the Belgian Labour Party, which was at that time

considered—however unjustly—the most reactionary of all the Socialist Parties, stopped the transportation of the munitions which had been manufactured in the factories of other countries. When we learned that millions of Russians were dying of hunger in the valley of the Volga, we did not stop to ask what were the causes of the famine, or to what section of the International the sufferers belonged. We immediately took action. The Amsterdam International drew up an agreement with the Soviet Government to send provisions to the famished population. And again, recently, when the serious problem of reparations was under consideration—a problem which cannot be resolved by a few theoretic phrases—we have seen the Socialists of the five principal countries concerned meeting with certain Communist groups and coming to an agreement upon certain formulae for common action.

CONDITIONS OF SUCCESS.

It is no question of agreement in principle which might lead us to refuse participation in a general Conference. But we are unanimous in the belief that if this Conference is to be effective, if it is to lead to any good results, if it is to increase the active strength of the working class, there must be between us a minimum of agreement upon the common action, accompanied by mutual confidence. If we go to a general Conference to display our differences, instead of strengthening proletarian action we shall weaken it. If, on the contrary, we go to a general Conference for the sole purpose of organising ourselves against the employers' offensive, against the monarchic offensive, against the militarist offensive, we may expect only good results. We believe that the question that has to be discussed to-day is, whether the proposed Conference can be of any value. I reply that it could not, and that we should refuse to take part in it if it were only to be a battleground where we should carry on our quarrels, or a field for manoeuvres between different sections of international Socialism.

GOOD FAITH.

From this point of view, I will explain why we are filled with suspicions and apprehensions. Certain documents have been published recently which justify these apprehensions. I do not wish to refer to a letter written by Radek, with which you are all familiar: that is a confidential document, and I do not like using confidential documents. Besides, it is unnecessary; for last December the Executive Committee of the Third International, in a document which had been carefully thought out and elaborated, and which was intended for publication, explained their real intentions. In this document, which is a strange mixture of ingenuousness and Machiavellianism, there are passages which remind me irresistibly of that scene in the Nibelungen cycle where Mime tells Siegfried of her intention to poison him, at the same time overwhelming him with friendly and flattering speeches. An appeal is made for union, for the realisation of the united front, but no secret is made of the intention to stifle us and poison us after embracing us. Whilst we are all put into the same sack—pending the day when we shall all be put in the same basket—, whilst we are being told, for example, that men like Jouhaux, Merheim, and Henderson, Vandervelde or Longuet, are serving the interests of the bourgeoisie, it is, to say the least of it, strange that these same men should be invited to take part in the defence of proletarian interests.

I know very well that one has to take these things in the Pickwickian sense; that in Communist circles to call a man a traitor simply means that you disagree with him in principle; and for myself I am all the less ready to take offence at these insults when I remember the state of mind of comrades who have been mixed up in events infinitely more tragic than those we have experienced since the war. I can assure you, therefore, that in the decision which we shall take the personal element will count for nothing.

Moreover, we feel very strongly that, if we have committed faults—no one is infallible,—in whatever circumstances we found ourselves we knew we were acting with our proletariat, for our proletariat, and with the sole desire to serve the Socialist cause. I leave all these questions on one side then. If I have recalled certain facts it is because they compel us to ask you a question; you told us this morning, in very moderate and careful language, not only that you were ready to unite with us in conference, but that you were anxious to do so. We are Social-traitors, Social-patriots; we are yellow, we are supporters of the bourgeoisie, Zinoviev has even said that I have committed crimes; and in spite of all this you consider that it would be useful to meet us in conference. But you explain to us, with an ingenuousness to which I have just drawn attention that if you wish to achieve proletarian unity it is for tactical reasons, a clever manoeuvre, in order that you may carry on the work which you have already begun. Under these conditions, we are bound to reply to you: Before we go to a general Conference, we must have certain guarantees; guarantees of reciprocal good faith; guarantees against *nogoutage*; against fresh divisions, against attempts to break up the unity of the workers, in such countries as Belgium or England, where this unity is still maintained.

This is the first question we put to you. Are you going, or do you wish to go, to a general Conference in order to continue your attempts at *nogoutage*, or are you ready to unite with us and come to an agreement upon certain clearly defined objectives?

GEORGIA, ARMENIA, UKRAINE.

I now pass to two other questions, which are no less important and which are intimately connected. I said just now that I was in agreement with our Vienna friends in their desire for a Conference in which an attempt would be made to organise common defensive action against capitalism. But do you think, even if

you limited your agenda in accordance with the proposals of the Vienna Union, it would be possible to avoid certain questions which would force themselves irresistibly upon the Congress when it came to discuss means for organising the defensive of the proletariat? Do you not realise that, at the very first meeting, if the Conference takes place without preliminary explanations and guarantees, Socialist representatives from all the border States of Russia will stand up,—from the Ukraine; from Armenia, where a people which has been decimated and has suffered martyrdom for twenty years is now caught in a vice between the Kemalists and the Red armies; from Georgia, where comrades forming a section of our International complain of what they call, I think rightly, Bolshevik imperialism? This will be the first discussion the day the Conference opens.

POLITICAL PRISONERS.

But there is a question still more grave; more pressing, if that is possible, than the position of the small Caucasian countries; a question very near to the hearts of all European Socialists, whatever their tendencies and opinions; the question of political prisoners. Suppose we call this Conference to-morrow, a general Conference of all Socialist Parties, will not this question be put inevitably before all others? Do you think this Conference can meet without a demand from us that those who are in prison to-day shall join us—those who are threatened with capital punishment; those who, after serving as convicts under the Tsarist régime, are now in the same position under the régime of the Third International?

Unless these questions are settled beforehand, how can we prevent them arising on the first day, during the first hour of the general Conference? And what will happen then? If you are determined to follow along the path you have chosen, you know quite well it means war to the bitter end, a struggle for the elementary rights of human personality. And under these con-

ditions, the general Conference, which was meant to strengthen us and consolidate us against capitalism, against the bourgeoisie, will on the contrary lead to violence, to confusion, to the deplorable spectacle of increased divisions, a proletariat weakened by divisions.

That is why, citizens, it seems to us essential to decide three preliminary questions before any decision can be taken upon the general Conference.

THREE QUESTIONS.

The first is this: Would you come to a Conference to work together in an attempt to strengthen our common action, or would you come to weaken and divide us?

Secondly, if the Conference meets, will the peoples who are at present deprived of all right to determine their own fate, the Ukrainians, the Armenians, the Georgians, be put in a position which will enable them to elect freely their delegates to the general Conference? I insist particularly upon the case of Georgia, and I speak of that primarily, because I have seen it myself: I am an eye-witness, we are eye-witnesses; we ourselves have seen, during weeks which we can never forget, a people gathering unanimously—or almost unanimously—under the red flag, under the régime of free suffrage, electing an immense Socialist majority which wants to live, which has the right to live, and which we are determined to help to live. I repeat the question: If the general Conference takes place, will the Georgian Party and the other Parties I have referred to be free to elect their delegates?

There remains the third question, which we hold very dear, the question of the prisoners. I do not pretend to judge yet; you have accused them, you must prove your case, but we are compelled to reserve our judgment until we have heard you. We have a right to demand, and it is our duty to demand, that the trial of the Social-Revolutionaries shall be held under conditions which will satisfy international Socialism, and which, above all, will guarantee elementary rights of defence. Ah!

here you have an opportunity for a "beau geste"! And don't say that you are not the Russian Government. Everybody knows, and you were the first to say it, that the actual Russian Government is identical with the Third International. This would be your opportunity to say: "We will bring our evidence, not before an extraordinary tribunal functioning without control, but before the Conference, before the International; and then one of two things would happen: either your accusations would be proved to be false and you would be told so; or your accusations would be proved to be just and those convicted of criminal intentions would be disqualified in the eyes of the proletariat.

Summing up then; guarantees against attempts at *noyautage*; guarantees for freely elected delegations from the peoples whose territory you are now occupying; finally, guarantees of rights of defence for the prisoners. Such are our conditions; for you cannot think that we could consent to take part with you in a Conference if we knew that over there in Moscow, in the prisons of Moscow, men who had suffered for our cause were still prisoners while we were discussing freely amongst ourselves. At a general Conference we must all feel at home, we cannot have as allies in the deliberations gendarmes and executioners.

FINAL APPEAL.

Citizens, this is what I have to say, in the name, as I repeat, of the Executive of the Second International. I have tried to express myself without bitterness—and I can testify that though we have often received insults, we have never replied to them; and I ask you in conclusion to consider what is at stake in these discussions. For the first time since 1914 we are united here. A sight like this is not without a certain grandeur, to see to-day in this assembly, whether as journalists or delegates, such men as Tchernov, Dan or Martov, side by side with Radek or Boukharin. We are united, and the assembly, citizens, is held in the very German

Reichstag where the war was begotten, where to-day free men sit on the ruins of autocracy. But this liberty which was so difficult to conquer remains precarious and unstable; it is threatened at once by reaction on the part of the employers, monarchist reaction, and militarist reaction. Can we not, in spite of everything which separates us, unite to defend it, to extend it, and by international action prepare the way for the coming of Socialism?

DECLARATION READ BY PAUL FAURE ON BEHALF OF THE VIENNA UNION.

The Executive of the International Union of Socialist Parties participates in this consultation of the three Executives according to the spirit and purpose of the resolutions of the International Conference in Vienna, held in February, 1921. The Vienna Conference formulated the principles of the I.U.S.P., stated the differences which separated the I.U.S.P. and the Second and the Communist Internationals, put before itself the goal to unite all Labour Parties without distinction in a common front against capitalism and imperialism, and devoted its entire activity to the achievement of this task.

The Executive of the I.U.S.P. greets the present Conference in the hope that it will be the first step towards the accomplishment of this object.

CONDITION OF SUCCESS.

In the determination to further with all its power the achievement of this end, the I.U.S.P. Executive is compelled emphatically to draw attention to the fact that the formation of a really united Labour Front such as the interests of the revolutionary struggle of Labour demands, can only succeed if the conflicts between

working class parties are conducted exclusively with intellectual and moral weapons, and are not poisoned by terroristic methods of combat of one workers' party against the other.

The Executive of the I.U.S.P. states the facts that in Soviet Russia, under the dictatorship of the Communist Party, the masses of the working people are deprived of all political rights and Trade Union freedom; the Socialist Parties are persecuted with terrorist means and deprived of all possibilities of existence; and that Socialist Georgia has been robbed of her right of self-determination by military occupation.

The I.U.S.P. Executive considers it a necessary condition of a real united front of the whole proletariat that equality of political rights shall be restored to Socialist Parties of Russia, the freedom of political and economic activity to the workers and peasants of Russia, and the right of self-determination to the toiling people of Georgia.

The Executive of the I.U.S.P. draws special attention to the fact that the carrying out of death sentences against members of the Social Revolutionary Party of Russia for acts they are said to have committed four years ago in a time of open civil war, and which are included in several decrees of amnesty proclaimed by the Soviet Government, would make the continuation of the action started by this Conference morally impossible.

The Executive of the I.U.S.P. states further that in many capitalistic states, even in those in which Right Wing Socialists participate in the Government, Left Socialist and Communist Parties were brutally persecuted, and that Governments in which Right Wing Socialists participated violated the right of peoples to self-determination.

The Executive declares that it is an indispensable necessity for a united proletarian front that all Socialist Parties must use all their power to restore the full freedom of expression for the Communist and all Labour

Parties, and to enforce the liberation of the many victims of the revolutionary struggles who are still suffering in prisons.

UNITED FRONT IMPERATIVE.

The Executive of the I.U.S.P. is convinced that the necessities of the class struggle of the proletariat will lead to the victory of the idea of a united front and to the general recognition of these conditions. Confident of this, the Executive of the I.U.S.P. does not consider it advisable to discuss all these questions in dispute at the present meeting, which has only the purpose to prepare a common Conference on broader lines, and declares its readiness to enter the common consultation of the work to be done for the creation of the united proletarian front.

KARL RADEK.

In our declaration we put no conditions for the calling of an International Conference. We stand upon the basis of the invitation, the intention of the Two-and-a-Half International that this should be a Conference for action; we stand upon a basis which, it seems, the Vienna International has forgotten. We refrained from settling past accounts, not because we prefer to keep silence when something ought to be said, but for the simple reason that we saw the need of the hour, the general condition of the world proletariat, and said to ourselves: "It is foolish to begin recriminations at a time like this, we have to think about what we want to do."

REPLY TO VANDERVELDE.

The representative of the Second International, Vandervelde, on his part thought it necessary to draw

a balance. He did it in the same voice, with the same gestures we saw at Basle ("Quite true!" from the Communists), when he as leader took the oath to lead us into the war against war; and the impressive strength of Vandervelde's voice carried us back for a moment to that time when we believed in the warmth of his voice, and we forgot for the moment that this voice had been drowned in the roar of the cannon. If Vandervelde wishes it, we will draw the balance of the eight years, the balance which perhaps will break up this Conference, but which will not sound pleasant in the ears of the former royal minister of the kingdom of Belgium. He has forgotten the sea of blood, he has forgotten the piles of corpses, he has forgotten the need of the world. This balance does not exist for him. After this balance he comes to us and says: "A little confidence, a minimum of confidence, just a little; and if you cannot give us this confidence on credit we have nothing to discuss!" And we say to Citizen Vandervelde to his face: "Not a pennyworth of confidence!" We have paid for this confidence, and this is the result, that we stand here to-day as enemies and have to try to find the way to an understanding; and if you come to us with phrases about confidence we say to you plainly: "No."

CONFIDENCE.

Confidence in what? In the war? Confidence in what? In the peace of Versailles which you signed as Belgian minister? Confidence in what? Confidence in whom? You speak in the name of an organisation. This organisation does not only consist of little Belgium. Confidence in the English occupation? Confidence in its crimes, against which the Labour Party has only fought in words, and about which the representatives of the Second International here have said nothing? The Social Revolutionary Tchaikin has published documents showing how the English police were responsible for the murder of twenty-six leaders of the Caucasian prole-

tariat. The names of the murderers were published. Did Citizen Tom Shaw call the attention of the English Parliament to the crimes of General Malesson and General Thomson? What action did you take with regard to the Archangel criminals? And then you say: confidence? This question is put by the Second International, amongst whose representatives here are members of the German Social Democracy.

We ask: "Where is the tribunal of all three Internationals which condemned the murder of Rosa Luxembourg and the murder of Karl Liebknecht?" ("Quite right!" from the Communists.) They were judged by the special tribunal of guards in Berlin, and if you have the courage to speak against the Russian courts, we say to you: "Hands off, until you have washed them clean of the blood of Rosa Luxembourg and Liebknecht, and the blood of Leviné, who was not murdered by bandits in the street, but as a result of a judgment in your courts (turning to the German Social Democrats), when you were in the Government as a result of the confidence of the proletariat which you abused."

A FIGHT WITHOUT CONFIDENCE.

But then you say: "If this is so, what do you want of this Conference, what tactical manoeuvres are you after? And I will tell you boldly and clearly to your face what we want. You came to this Conference because you had to; you were the instruments of world reaction, and now, whether you want it or not, you must be the instruments of the struggle for the interests of the proletariat. And without confidence we say to you: we sit down at the same table with you, we will fight with you, and this fight will decide whether it is a manoeuvre, as you say, in favour of the Communist International or a stream which will unite the working class. What you do will decide the meaning of our action. If you fight with us and with the proletariat of all lands—not fight for dictatorship, we do not expect

so much, but fight for a crust of bread, fight against further world ruin—then in this struggle the proletariat will come closer together, and then we shall judge you not on the ground of this terrible past, but on the ground of fresh facts. So long as these are not present, we go with cold hearts into these negotiations, and into this common action with deep mistrust that you may fail us ten times in this battle. But we will try to fight together, not for love of you, but because of the unprecedented need of the hour which drives us and compels you to confer in this hall with the very Communists you have treated as criminals.

And now to the further conditions put by Citizen Vandervelde. What you have attempted here was on the part of the Second International a brusque attack in order to intimidate us, and the Vienna International has joined in, *nolens volens*, with a heavy heart. I refer to the conditions put by the gentlemen of the Second International, and I think you will not make much boast about the answer to these.

VERSAILLES TREATY.

Conditions! Citizen Vandervelde said: You speak of the Versailles treaty. *En passant*, he said he was afraid this might also help Stinnes. The German workers cannot buy shirts and Citizen Vandervelde does not worry because international capitalism is fattening on the need of the German people; he is afraid—Stinnes might get richer, Stinnes who, we all know, has made a pact with Soviet Russia and perhaps might finance the Communist International! (*Laughter from the Communists.*) Monsieur Vandervelde does not make it quite clear: does he, like Poincaré, want to discuss the reconstruction of the world without touching the Versailles treaty, or what else does his remark about Stinnes mean? I am not a sufficiently gifted diplomatist to understand. (*Loud laughter.* MARROV: *So you have shown.*) So I have shown; quite right; and

so I ask: "Does the Second International want the question of the Versailles treaty put on the agenda?" It will be very interesting if the German Social Democrats, as members of the Second International, oppose the discussion of the Versailles question at this International Conference: perhaps they place their hopes in Lloyd George!

SMALL NATIONALITIES.

Now I come to the remaining conditions put to us. With the great love which Vandervelde always displays towards small and suppressed peoples, even when they live in the Congo, he asks us: "How can you appear at the Conference when the ghosts of murdered Georgia and the Ukraine will appear and ask: 'Why did you murder us, Cain?'" I will tell Citizen Vandervelde quite plainly why we murdered this Banguo. With regard to the Ukraine, it is not murdered, it lives, it is strong, it is fighting. And it is only ghosts of the Petlura Government, who live by injections of gold from the Polish military staff and at the same time beg for life in Paris and from the International, who are spoiling Vandervelde's sleep. He may rest undisturbed; the Ukraine is alive, it is healthy even if it is hungry, and will, not as a border State but as a part of the Soviet Federation, fight with us for the reconstruction of Russia and the recovery of the Russian people. (*Interruption: Not the people of Ukraine!*) I think that the workers and peasants who drove out the Petlura Government in spite of the support of the German Government, were Ukrainians. I do not know whether the interrupter was a member of the Rada which drove us out of the Ukraine with the help of General Hoffman, as it now hopes to do with the help of the Entente. (*Various interruptions.*)

With regard to Georgia, I do not know why Citizen Vandervelde should be so distressed because, instead of Tschaidze or Jordania, Medinani has appeared in Tiflis

or because Baku, that gate of invasion, is not in English hands. I say to the representatives of the Second International, and especially to the English delegates: "Hands off Georgia!" You did not protest when the Georgian Government under the protection of English canons massacred the peasants and workers of Georgia. (*Contradictions and applause.*) Our Tschekisten are not talented men-of-letters. The Georgians were indiscreet enough, in the person of Mr. Dschugeli, the leader of their national guards, to leave behind them a book, and in this book the Georgian democracy is presented in such a way that we will bring this book to the next Conference, so that you may learn that the Georgian State too was built out of blood and iron. And if you ask why—and now we say it openly—we helped to overthrow the Georgian Government, we will give you the answer from the documents which the Georgian Government itself was indiscreet enough to print. The information given to Elexejew by the foreign minister of Georgia reads: "We have helped the Whites; we have not only suppressed the Bolshevists in our country, but have fed your White officers and sent them to you;" and if the Conference would like to set up a little commission to prove the authenticity of this document we will very gladly submit it to them.

POLITICAL PRISONERS.

At the end came the most pathetic voice: How will you come without the Social Revolutionaries; how will you come without these good Internationalists who belong neither to the Second nor the Vienna International, but stand under the protection of the Second and ask for admission to the Two-and-a-Half? We have the honour to see present in this assembly, as a journalist, the former representative of the Russian Constituent Assembly, Tchernoff; and I think if you want to discuss the Social Revolutionaries with us there are enough representatives of the Social Revolutionaries

abroad; we need not seek further than this Conference those who, revolver in hand, tried to murder the leaders of the Russian Revolution. (SCHREIDER: *Spiridonova*!) Please put your questions to Spiridonova, I have no reason to go into the matter.

ACTION v. DISCUSSION.

Allow me now to leave the sphere of politics and put the question as it actually stands: in agreement with the Vienna International we have proposed the calling of a Conference in preparation for action. We said to ourselves: debates over points of controversy, over methods, are certainly not going to help. If differences will ever be smoothed out, it can only be through a common struggle which will build the bridge between the different sections of the proletariat. If you want to wreck this Conference of action and have an International Conference for discussion, we say: "You are giving the proletariat stones instead of bread." But we are not accustomed to avoid discussion. Therefore we are willing to clear the whole matter up, we are willing to present you with the balance of eight years and demand a discussion. We will remind the German Social Democrats who cry "Hands off Russia" that in the Bavarian prisons men who fought for the Republic have been sitting for three years, that there are men in the German prisons as a result of the March action. (WELS: *Eberlein*!) Ask Horsing; he will tell you. We will ask you: "What about the murder of Dato, who was handed over to the Spanish gallows by the German Government, in which are your representatives, for half a million pesetas, to be distributed amongst the Berlin police, at the head of which stands a Social Democrat?" We will ask you: "Who murdered fifteen thousand proletarians in Germany?" And we shall see what answer you can make. (WELS: *Ask Eberlein*!) Eberlein did not murder fifteen thousand workers, but Noske; the whole world knows that. We will present

the account for every country; for if we are sinners, you are the representatives of a dozen Parties, my worthy friends, whose sins surpass imagination.

Summing up, then, we say: We propose a Conference for action, a Conference to decide what is to be done at this moment when capital is gathering together, not to reconstruct the world, but to plunder the whole world. What are we to do about unemployment, what are we to do about the wave of capitalist lock-outs? That is our programme. Do you want to discuss it—we are ready for discussion. But as for satisfying the delicate feelings of Vandervelde, who is still keeping Flemish autonomists in prison, and the tender-hearted Wels about the fate of the Social Revolutionary prisoners, we say: "Show us that you are better men than we are; offer us an exchange—the Russian Terrorists you hold so sacred for the men who fought for the Bavarian Republic and in the March action." (TCHERNOFF: *Blackmail*!) Whoever talks of blackmail is a man without any sense. I will answer you in such a way that you will forget the word! (*Uproar*.) We say: do you want to wreck the Conference—you will have to bear the responsibility! If you want a Congress to consider action, we are ready. If you want a Congress at which the methods of the proletarian struggle will be set up one against the other, we are also ready. We are ready for a Conference in any form. One thing, however, we cannot allow: to have conditions imposed upon us by people to whom we have presented no conditions, although nine-tenths of the proletariat have no confidence at all in you. (*Interruption from Wels and excitement*.) I say to you: If you put conditions to us, conditions to be fulfilled before we go to this Conference, then we say to you: we refuse these conditions. If we come together in a common struggle, certain results will follow, for which no pledge need be given: for they will develop out of the common struggle, and this is why we are in favour of the common struggle.

I repeat: we have accepted the initiative of the

be a reasoned reply upon the merits of the questions raised. What delegate here—and I include the delegates of the Third International—can go and report that Radek's reply was a reasoned reply to the questions put by Vandervelde? None whatever.

“WHY ARE YOU HERE?”

On Sunday morning we had a statement made which, as I say, opened up the door for an understanding. We thought the Third International talked in our language. We saw in your statement an echo of the speeches which we had been delivering for the last three or four years. You had given us an explanation of this change in your front, in the manifesto issued by the Executive of the Third International last December. That explanation was not a good one. It was this: “Comrades of the Third International, there is a movement on foot in Europe for a united front. It does not matter whether we are in favour of it or not; our tactics compel us to appear to be in favour of it; but we ask the Communist sections all over Europe to take part in the creation of the united front, not for the purpose of making it effective, but for the purpose of making it Communist through direct propaganda inside the organisations taking part in the movement.” That was your manifesto. Again I appeal to the delegates of the Third International. Am I not interpreting its language aright? We have it in English, it has been published in full, we have studied it, and naturally—or you would think much less of us than I hope you do—it has raised suspicions in our minds. We come here anxious to promote co-operation, but we come here to ask you as man to man: Is that why you are here? Are you here for the purpose of creating a united front which will not really be a united front, but will enable you to go to the working classes of Europe and say: “We are in favour of the united front”; but whilst you are saying that to the general public of Europe you are saying to your own organisations: “Do not bother

about the united front, except so far as it goes to the weakening of other organisations and the strengthening of our own.” Candidly, my friends, without any reserve, that suspicion is in my mind, and I want it removed. If you can remove it, why don't you remove it? If you can't, why carry on the farce of a Conference such as this?

AN ESSENTIAL TO ACTION.

I hoped you were going to remove it. Many things have happened to the Communist movement during the last few months. In Russia the great strategic retreat has begun. We knew it had to come; we regretted that you had put yourselves in such a position that it would have to come. We have read Lenin's speeches, we have studied them, and we believed that they might be the beginning of real united action, and I took your declaration on Sunday morning to mean this. Are you in favour of a united front for its own sake and not for your own sakes? When you ask us to come to Genoa and to call a Conference with you, what is to be the issue of it? In the words of an old Scotch song, I want to know whether you have come here in peace or whether you have come here in war? Upon that point Radek said nothing. Are we to interpret his silence to mean this, that you have nothing to say? Are we to take Radek's attitude and the pronouncement he made in your name and on your behalf to mean that the December statement of the Third International holds good? Would you be good enough to answer that question in a categorical and definite way? Because this is not merely a question of suspicion. You say to us, and quite rightly: “Would you tell us what that has to do with the united action we propose?” Delegates of the Third International, it has everything to do with it. Suppose this manifesto holds good, how can we agree to the calling of a general Conference; how can we agree to the formulation of resolutions to be carried by that Conference? If we start our action what sort of

action will it be if we feel that every Communist, while carrying it out, has a dagger concealed behind his back which he is going to put into us if we give him an opportunity? You must see that until you have given us an explanation of the meaning of that manifesto it is absurd to talk about a united front or common resolutions to issue in common action.

GEORGIA.

There is another essential point. Vandervelde raised the question of border States, mentioning Georgia in particular. I am not going to go into details about Georgia. I have come here to do serious business, to see whether there is any possibility of united action for the future. But in the case of Georgia there is something essential: though its sins be as scarlet, I am not at all sure that if we appointed an impartial commission it would be very easy to establish your claim that you are saints. Therefore put that on one side. The essential fact is that Georgia had a Socialist Government. The party in Georgia responsible for that Government is affiliated to us; the party in Georgia responsible for that Government is represented here by a delegate sitting at this table. You suppressed it by military force. You hold your position now there to-day by military force. We say: How can we act together until the Government for which we are responsible is re-established—or at any rate until the military occupation which has excluded them from the country is withdrawn and the people of the country have a chance of saying whether they want you or us. I put it to you: is not our position the only position that men of common sense could take up when discussing the possibilities of future action? We offer you a proposal: send a commission representative of Socialist tendencies; give them a chance of enquiring and issuing a report. I can assure you, so far as we are concerned, if such a commission goes, it will go impartially for the purpose of discovering the truth. We ask for an honest enquiry.

BOLSHEVIST IMPERIALISM.

In any event, the position taken up by Radek, and the character of his reply, is not such as to make it easy for us to continue exploring opportunities of further co-operation. Your reply, defending your action in Georgia, is not only militarist, but similar to that applied by the Allied capitalist Governments to-day in Ireland, Egypt, and to Russia itself. You cannot possibly take up the position of capitalist imperialist militarism in one case and in the next that of Socialist comrades—people who believe in justice. Moreover, what are you doing by all this? I am speaking to men who have belonged to subject nationalities under Austria-Hungary. You know perfectly well that when you came to meet us in International Conferences, you produced your resolutions on nationalism. One of the greatest troubles of the old International was that we never met without having to unravel some nationalist tangle or other. Your policy in Georgia and neighbouring States is maintaining this spirit of nationalism. So long as that is predominant in the minds of the working classes we cannot have a united front. Nationalism must disrupt the united front of the economic movement. We come with all that experience behind us, and all the difficulties in front of us, and ask for a reasoned reply to our questions. Instead of that, Radek starts telling us about shootings by some British officers! But Radek did not tell us how the Bolsheviks shot a few more by way of reprisals. Seriously, comrades, that kind of reply is trifling with this Conference.

POLITICAL PRISONERS.

The third question upon which Vandervelde asked for information was with reference to prisoners. What is the position there? You hold those men in your prisons, and you are going to try them. Vandervelde asks: "Will you satisfy the International Socialist movement as to the nature of the trial?" Radek replies and tries to stir up our feelings by mentioning

the name of Rosa Luxembourg. What did Rosa Luxembourg try to do? Rosa Luxembourg tried to liberate Germany from what she considered to be a tyranny. (*Interruption: You agree?*) I am glad that Radek agrees to that way of stating it. What were those prisoners you hold trying to do? They were trying to liberate Russia from what they considered a tyranny. You say the Government in power here was responsible for Rosa Luxembourg's murder. Why do you go and copy the same thing yourselves? You know perfectly well it is not going to strengthen you, to give you an ounce of respect outside, to lay one single stone in the foundation of the Government you have striven so hard to build up. If you would just for a moment do a generous thing, it will come back a thousandfold in renewed strength and interest to you. Why do you not do it? Our position is quite clear, and, again, I am sure Radek and his friends must respect us for taking it up. Those men are our colleagues. Their representatives disagree. You may be right. We may be right. At any rate until the issue is settled we both hold our opinions. But can you imagine us saying that this is all going to be put in the background, that we are going to sit and talk about an action, the genuineness of which we are not quite sure about, whilst you hold the lives of our comrades in your hands because they are our comrades? Your strategy is too refined. Your tactics are too clever.

What is our proposal? A very simple and reasonable one. We say: "Try them by an international tribunal." Radek replies: "That is an insult to our Courts and our Government. Hands off!" May I confess, I agree with Radek on that point. We make another suggestion. We say: "Try those men by judicial process, not merely saying that you are going to do that, but satisfy us that there will be a judicial process. Go further. No nation's system of judicature can claim universal respect if it is designed only to satisfy that nation itself. We come to

you and say: "Try them by a judicial court and agree that they will be properly defended." We propose to you that you should allow Vandervelde to go to make himself responsible for the defence of those prisoners. We are in a position to say that if you accept that, the compatriots of those men will agree. We put that question quite categorically to you again.

I cannot leave this without a reference to the way in which Radek dealt with it, a rather painful way. It reminded me far more of a cynical gesture than a serious treatment of a problem or a reasonable answer to a request. He says: "Hand us over the prisoners in Bavaria and we will hand you over these men." We will not consider the problem from that point of view. In any event the Bavarian prisoners are not ours to hand over. So long as you say: "We are going to give them a political and not necessarily a judicial trial"—which I take to be the substance of Radek's reply—if I am wrong it is the fault of Radek's "gesture"—there are barriers to common action that cannot be removed. If you raise the question of the German Communist prisoners, we agree that you raise the question quite naturally. But if you say: "Bargain man for man, exchange this prisoner for that," we say "No." This is not the frame of mind in which the subject ought to be dealt with. If we are going to co-operate we must breathe the same judicial atmosphere; we must have justice, not commercialism; commercialism applied to prisoners is a very objectionable form of commercialism indeed, and we will not even think of it.

These are our three questions. We put them again. We ask: Is Radek's word the last word that the Third International has to say upon it?

A CRITICISM OF THE THIRD'S PROPOSAL.

I will not deal with the practical proposals as to how the Conference should be constituted. I think you must have felt yourselves the absurdity of asking Emma Goldman to come and meet Samuel Gompers. Do you

want the Conference to be a bear garden? Is it part of your policy that you are going to call a Conference that will make the whole international movement a thing for capitalists to laugh at? And then, when you have delighted the press for a week with a display of irreconcilable elements, when you have a Conference which is not a Conference of the united front, but an absolutely and completely laughable and foolish farce, then are you going to apply the manifesto of the Third International to those of us who are working for united action and begin to assassinate us one after the other for having taken you at the face value of your words? No, it won't do, and nobody knows that better than the representatives of the Third International itself. I quite agree with Radek that what he calls absolute confidence is impossible. I do not want it. The problem is, have we enough in common to give us room to move in the same plane? We cannot agree. Are our disagreements so fundamental that points of agreement become too narrow for common action? Yes, so long as the fundamental conditions are unfulfilled. It is no use talking about tactics, we must get down to the principles of great ideas—justice, self-respect, harmony and co-operation. When we have settled those, then we can come to business. Therefore I am instructed by the Second International to read to you this written declaration, so that there will be no misunderstanding about our position:

DECLARATION OF THE SECOND.

"We accept the principle of a general conference with a limited objective, under the conditions and with the agenda proposed by the Vienna Union.

"We declare, however, that this conference must be preceded by the acceptance of the following conditions by the Third International:

- "(1) Renunciation of the 'noyautage' tactics.
- "(2) Nomination of a commission from the delegates of the three Executive Committees for the examination

of the case of Georgia and other States similarly circumstanced, with a view to reaching an agreement between the Socialist Parties:

"We make this suggestion with the desire to expedite the conference, but wish it to be plainly understood that the resolutions we have passed demanding the recognition of the Georgian people to decide, free from military influence, their own form of government, still hold good.

"(3) The liberation of prisoners detained for political reasons, and the trial of those who are the objects of a criminal accusation before a court of justice with rights of defence under the control of International Socialism."

TACTICS v. THE THIRD.

In my opinion, if those conditions are accepted, or if some sort of agreement is come to upon them, this conference can be held before the summer is ended. (I express here my own personal view.) I believe we can agree upon an agenda. The Vienna Union has given us one, and the Second International has officially stated that it accepts it. I believe, further, we could agree upon resolutions dealing with the findings of Genoa, give the Parliamentary parties, the political parties, and the industrial parties, a common objective to co-operative effort as a result; but I cannot unite in action whilst the Executive of the Third International has made it perfectly clear, in a published declaration, that it is going to use smooth words to bring us closer to it so that its knocks upon us may be all the more deadly. I am not going to enter into tactics and use the poverty and starvation of Europe as ground for manoeuvring. I decline it. Tactics at the present time, manoeuvring for position, is most detestable. No man in this conference ought to use his influence in support of disruptive tactics in view of the present position. All I ask you is: Are we joining in this united action or are we not? Are we going to have "working" confidence in one another? Are we going to put an end to the things which make it

impossible for us to co-operate one with another? If not, let us go our separate ways. You have your work to do, we have ours. You must go on, we must go on. I can assure you that we are going to act alone or in conjunction. We have acted, we are going to continue to act. We are going to strengthen our action, so that it is more effective inside and outside Parliament. Time and events will strengthen those who are doing the most loyal service to the world.

SERRATI.

The position of the Italian Socialist Party in this Conference is very strange. We do not belong to either of the three Internationals, and we are only here as guests, under conditions still more strange. You admitted us as guests, simply because it was said that the general Conference might be held at Genoa or Rome; but this Conference, it seems, is now in danger, which means that our position is so uncertain that I must ask you to pardon me if I speak my mind rather freely.

Why have we summoned this Conference? Why did we think good to hold the preliminary Conference at Frankfurt? Why have we all come here, from London, Vienna and Moscow? Just because of a wish, a very noble wish, on the part of comrade Adler—or, rather, because circumstances have compelled us to meet together here.

OUR PURPOSE.

In a word, is the character of the Conference to be a moral one or a practical and political one? Are we here to set ourselves up as judges one of another, or to accomplish a practical piece of work, international action on the part of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie? This is the way, as I take it, in which the question must be put.

We are surely not here to set ourselves up as judges one of another. We have all committed many errors. Perhaps—if you will allow me to say so, dear comrade

Vandervelde—the judges have committed more errors than the accused, because the judges have committed them in alliance with our enemies. The accused committed errors for the sake of the revolution and not of the bourgeoisie.

THE STRUGGLE.

What is the actual situation? The bourgeoisie is trying to load again upon the shoulders of the proletariat the burdens they have destroyed. The bourgeoisie is trying to take away from us the relatively good conditions which we have won by many years of struggle. The bourgeoisie is on the defensive in every country, in the “democratic” countries as well as the imperialist countries; more particularly in the “democratic” countries, dear comrade Vandervelde. I quite understand that in a certain sense you are not so deeply concerned about the present situation, because the position of the proletarian movement in Belgium is fairly good. The Communists even voted for you at the recent elections; the proletarian movement in Belgium is united. I quite understand, therefore, that your desire for unity should not be greater than ours. And the same conditions exist in England. But there are other countries where the unity of the proletariat is a matter of life and death; it is for us; and it is also for you, because there are always political reverberations to be felt in every country. And if the divisions among the proletariat in France continue as they have begun, in a short time the Belgian proletariat will also be divided; and if in Germany they continue in the same way, the bourgeoisie will prevail, and the Social Democrats will be obliged to crush the German workers more and more to reconstruct bourgeois economy. This is the position. Are you not disturbed about the reaction which is growing fiercer and fiercer in every country? Do you not see that in Belgium, too, where you have participated in the Government, the civil guards are becoming more and more of a menace, and that in the factories the bourgeoisie is working against

the workers? And you have no strength to resist this bourgeois reaction. Do you not see that in other countries reaction is organising itself just as fiercely as it did before the war?

MORALS AND POLITICS.

If this is true, no one can deny that the proletariat—whether they adhere to London, Vienna or Moscow—must create a united front, must re-organise itself. How do you reply to this proposal for a united front? With a moral question. I listened with great interest this morning to comrade MacDonald's speech, but I could not help asking myself whether we were here in a gathering of moralists or of politicians. I know very well that you will say that it is impossible to separate morals and politics; but to say this is demagoguery. When you went into the war—which we opposed—you accepted the motto of Clemenceau, "I am waging war," which means that when you are fighting you cannot choose your weapons; and lying, violence, terror, were used against the proletariat by governments with whom you shared responsibility. And now you consider you have a right to raise moral questions against the Bolsheviks!

Ah! you say: "Freedom for peoples to dispose of themselves!" But Sir Roger Casement was condemned while you were in the Government; when you were responsible. To-day he is considered a martyr in the cause of the Irish national revolution. When you were waging war, lying was a noble thing! Terror was necessary, because the war had to be carried on!

You have always lauded to the skies the bourgeois French Revolution. But we cannot imagine the French Revolution without the guillotine, without the Terror.

If I recall these historic facts, it is because you and all of us must take them into account. Perhaps if the position had been reversed, if you had been in the same straits as the Russian comrades, you would have acted in the same way. It is not possible to play the part of

accusers, when we are simply the slaves of circumstances. We do not rule history; we follow it. And then, what are these three conditions which you have put to the Bolshevik comrades, and under what conditions do you seek to impose them?

THE CONDITIONS OF THE SECOND.

If the Russian Revolution rested on a firm basis, perhaps you would be right in putting these conditions and saying: Do not abuse your power! But you put these conditions at a terrible moment for the Revolution, when the international bourgeoisie, having failed by armed methods, is now trying to suppress the Revolution by worse methods; at a moment when it behoves us all to defend the Revolution even against the Bolsheviks themselves if this is necessary, even against ourselves; telling them that they are committing errors but not weakening their front against their enemies, who are also ours. You have not taken into account the international situation, the serious position of the Russian Revolution, and, in consequence, of the international proletariat.

Let us examine your three conditions. First of all, I believe, you spoke of internal liberty; that is to say, freedom for the Social Revolutionary comrades to carry out their political work in Russia. Is it possible to examine this condition? Can the Bolshevik comrades accept such a discussion in a meeting like this? Do you not see that, without realising it, you are weakening a force which is not outside us but is our very own? The Bolshevik comrades have already done something in this direction. I think they will do more. I am persuaded that the Bolshevik comrades will eventually form a coalition: that you Bolsheviks, you Mensheviks, you Social Revolutionaries, will unite one day to defend the proletarian revolution against the attack of the capitalist bourgeoisie. But because this is becoming possible, it is our duty as internationalists not to put conditions, not to force the situation. Our duty should be to

understand and to try to act in such a way as not to embitter discussions; not to deepen wounds, but to seek to cure them as far as we can. How can we cure the wounds?

THE PRISONERS.

A month ago, the Social Revolutionaries sent us a telegram in which they said: "The prisoners in Butirky are going to be put to death, before the Conference, unless the International does its duty immediately." I do not know whether the intention of the Bolsheviks really was to kill them all.

We ought to endeavour to show them where their own interests lie without putting upon them a cap which does not fit them. But the Bolsheviks have done more. You have not mentioned the "Tcheka," but there seems to be in this room something of the spirit of the "Tcheka," and it might be said that we have had some examples of it here. Revolution always uses the means at its disposal; it cannot be an elegant lady who walks upon flowers, it does what it can and what it must. But it is also true that Lenin, before you had put your first condition, declared in a speech that the methods of procedure of the "Tcheka" would have to be changed. You do not want to poison the situation. I believe that the Conference will be more successful than is expected. It does not depend upon the will of the Bolsheviks, they must submit to the necessities which circumstances impose. And if it is true that they are already giving up those practices of which you accuse them, if it is true that Lenin has recognised that the internal political situation must be changed, if it is true that they have already begun to take steps in that direction, is it our duty and is it to our political interests to do all we can to bring them back to their old methods, or is it not rather our duty and to our interests to lead them along our paths? I think the second method is the best.

GEORGIA.

Let us examine the second condition. It concerns the

liberty of Georgia. Remember, dear comrade Vandervelde, that when there were Socialists in the world who tried to stop the war, who wanted to give peace to the peoples and, to obtain this peace, launched an idea which was not their own, the idea of the right of peoples to determine their own fate, an idea which might have been a cry of unity from the proletariat, you said: "We will prevent it!" You tried to prevent Zimmerwald; but now it is a case of Georgia, the case of a people whose Socialist Party belongs to the London International. And then you say: "Liberty for peoples to determine their own fate." We might discuss this formula; which, according to my opinion, is not altogether socialist. For example, I believe that the desire for divisions, for the stabilisation of frontiers rather than their destruction, the desire to create a kind of "cordon sanitaire" from Finland to the Emir of Faisal, as the Entente has attempted to do, is not socialist. It serves the interests of imperialism, not of socialism.

We have met the problems of Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaïdjan, Persia, and all the other countries of the Near East, before. I think that socialists have known them for a long time, just as they have seen how the small peoples may become, at a certain moment of international imperialist politics, mere tools in the hands of international capitalism to work for capitalist and not for proletarian interests. Now what is the position in Georgia to day? What was the position in Georgia some time ago? Do you think it will be possible to resolve a problem, which is a century-old problem, by means of a commission of enquiry, meeting under artificial conditions and unable to judge fairly, as has happened with all commissions of enquiry? And why a commission of enquiry for Georgia, and not, for example, for Upper Silesia, Tunis, Algeria, Tripoli, the Congo, etc.? Simply because you have a representative of the Georgian Socialists in your London International?

It is not enough! It is true that there are grave problems in a country which was administrated by a

Socialist Government, or one which called itself Socialist, and which has been invaded by the army of another Socialist Government, or one which calls itself Socialist.

UNITY.

I do not want to support one side or the other, but it is obvious that we cannot resolve such a question in a fortnight. We ought to consider our international political action, which can only be carried through if we come to some agreement. If we break off the Conference to-day, if we go away without reaching an agreement, some of us to London, some to Vienna, and some to Moscow, the strife will go on in Georgia and everywhere else. If, on the other hand, we remain together, begin to build up this unity of front, this unity will make it possible for us to resolve, not only the Georgian problem, but all other problems which can be solved under a capitalist régime. According to the convictions of the Italian delegation, no preliminary conditions ought to be put to the general Conference. The general Bureau, which might be elected by the Conference, might be charged with the task of smoothing out differences between one section and another. The Conference must work in the interests of the international movement. We ought not to examine national questions isolated one from another, but to consider them in their relation to the international situation.

NOYAUTAGE.

Let us examine the third question. You ask the Communists: What do you want to do? Do you mean to poison us with your *noyautage*? I am no Mithridates and am not proof against poison. But I believe that a strong and healthy movement need not fear poison. We try to overcome it. Perhaps we shall not succeed. The chief thing is to know how to take it. And you, Belgian comrades, did you have no fear of another kind of poison? I ask myself if, when it was a question of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, you

fortified yourselves against the bourgeois poison in the same way as you want to fortify yourselves against the revolutionary poison. No! You said then: "For our country, for its defence, for the common good, let us all march together!" Guesde, and you, Vandervelde (PAUL FAURE: *And Cachin*.) Yes, Cachin too. I was just going to say it. You did not trouble yourselves whether you would be poisoned or not. You took the poison. And you are still suffering from it. I do not know how long you will feel the consequences. On the other hand, the Bolshevik comrades have no absolute right to reproach you for your attitude in the past, because they, too, have among their ranks those who have drunk poison; who have drunk a great deal and are not yet cured. What is this *noyautage*? It is something that we all do when we want to get together those comrades who are in agreement with us in order to carry out some special task of propaganda in the general situation. It is true that the Bolsheviks have sometimes carried it out in a very malicious way. (A voice: *You know something about that*.) I think so. I am here both as judge and accused. But *noyautage* will be stronger if we are divided than if we are united. I believe there will be no more *noyautage* when our Bolshevik comrades no longer find themselves alone to defend their cause, when we show them that we too are working for the defence of the Revolution itself. The Bolsheviks know how to be skilful in their politics. In the most painful, the most dangerous situations, they alone have shown themselves to be real statesmen. The bourgeoisie has produced politicians, the proletariat has produced real statesmen. These men will understand that their position to-day is not that of two years ago. They ought to know that if we effect this unity it will serve for the defence of the Russian Revolution. Is it possible that they could wish to destroy it? No, they want to live, even by the means which you call "Machiavellian." And to live they must remain in the united front and remain there in the spirit of brothers,

because they cannot do otherwise in view of the international situation.

THE ITALIAN POINT OF VIEW.

Comrades, I think I have said in a few words what was necessary to explain our point of view, the point of view of the Italian Socialists. I must add that this is the standpoint of *all* the Italian Socialists, who at their last national congress passed a resolution in this sense drawn up by comrade Treves and myself.

One word more. If we can go on with this Conference, if we can realise our goal of a general Conference, it will mean the salvation of the international proletariat. If we cannot, it may mean a victory for capitalist imperialism over the workers' International, for who knows how long. At the beginning of the war it was said: "The war will destroy Socialism." Socialism is still alive in spite of all our errors. We must all be ready to work together, for practical action. Such action is desired throughout the world; you are all agreed about the necessity for defending the Russian Revolution; for struggling against world reaction; for the revision or abrogation of the Treaty of Versailles, which is an infamy and a heavy burden upon the proletariat of every country. We have to anticipate and prevent the danger of a new war which is in preparation. And I think that in this practical action those who need above all to be in agreement are the German Social Democrats and the Russian Bolsheviks. However contradictory and paradoxical this may sound, you are in very similar positions. You have to defend your positions. Capitalism is trying to invade Russia; and at the same time, climbing upon your shoulders, Social Democratic comrades, and under cover of your responsibility, is trying to carry out in Germany its policy of loading upon the proletariat all the burdens of the war. If we want, dear comrades, to develop this practical action, to make the international proletariat feel that we realise our duty and our interests, we cannot leave this Conference without having reached an agreement.

Tuesday, April 4th, 1922.

AFTERNOON SESSION, 4-15 p.m.

President: FRIEDRICH ADLER (Austria).

OTTO BAUER.

OTTO BAUER (Austria): The task which we have set before us at this Conference is to bring together the three armies into which the proletariat has been unfortunately divided, so that they may be able once more to march together against the common enemy, and, united, defeat that enemy.

SERRATI.

Comrade Serrati asked us this morning to consider this problem as a purely strategic one, and to put aside all moral considerations in our deliberations. I must confess that I do not entirely agree with Serrati on this point: co-operation between the three armies depends upon certain moral conditions. I agree with MacDonald that we shall certainly not be able to attain a real, firmly established, and effective unity of front unless we gradually learn to re-awaken in these three armies those feelings of solidarity and comradeship, and that readiness to sacrifice individual party interests to the general interests of the working-class, without which we cannot hope to wage a really united proletarian class struggle. It seems to me without a doubt that the real task before us, if we are to secure common action, must be gradually to eliminate the spirit of competition between the three organisations and to substitute the relationship of real comradeship in arms. So far, then, I agree with MacDonald that we must also seek moral conditions for co-operation.

THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL.

But, comrades, I disagree with my comrades of the Second International, because I believe that these moral conditions must be sought further and in a more comprehensive form than the comrades of the Second International have so far suggested during this Conference; and in the second place, I believe that the way to reach these moral conditions is quite different from the way sought by the comrades of the Second International.

MORAL CONDITIONS.

First, let me speak of the first point, the moral conditions themselves. In my opinion they are quite right in demanding as a condition for co-operation that all the organisations united here should respect the *right of peoples to self-determination*, and they complain, quoting this as a barrier to co-operation, that the right of self-determination in the case of the Georgian Republic has been violated. Comrade Serrati has spoken somewhat sceptically about the right of peoples to self-determination. I cannot agree with him there. We German-Austrians, who have suffered ourselves because our bourgeoisie tried to dominate other nations and violate the right of self-determination of other nations, we support this principle absolutely, and go so far as to consider that even a partial success in the direction of the liberation of peoples is an historical step forward, although it may be used at the moment by one imperialism or another for its own ends.

GEORGIA.

On these grounds alone it can be seen that there is no divergence of opinion between us and the Second International on the question of Georgia. And I will go further. Since 1914 there have been many violations of this principle. We know how the war began with the attempt of Austria-Hungary to violate it; we know how examples of such violation were given by Austria-

Hungary and Germany during the war by the infamous treaties of Brest-Litovsk and Bucharest; we know how this example was followed by the victors after the war in the treaties of Riga in the East and of Versailles and Trianon and Sèvres and St. Germain in the West. We admit, however, that the case of Georgia stands apart from all these others, because here there were proletarian and socialist parties on both sides, who were responsible for what happened; because it was an army flying the red flag which in this case supported the military occupation; because whenever the proletariat now raises a protest against the violent deeds of imperialism it is met with a scornful reference to Georgia. ("*Quite right!*" from the representatives of the Second and Vienna.)

OTHER CASES.

I have gone further, then, and said that the case of Georgia is in quite a different category from other cases of the violation of the right of peoples to self-determination. But, however true this may be, comrades of the Second International, can you seriously say that in every case of the violation of the right of peoples to self-determination which we have experienced since 1918 Socialist Parties, to which you belonged and in some cases still belong, have not also been responsible? ("*Very true!*" from the representatives of Vienna and Moscow.) There are other cases. This principle is being violated in the case of small nations and also great nations, and such attempts are still going on. And, comrades, if this is a moral condition, which I admit, for the united front of the proletariat and all the proletarian parties, that self-determination of peoples shall be respected, this certainly applies to Georgia. But it also applies to a whole number of other cases, where the principle has been violated by Governments in which Socialist Parties participate, which are affiliated to you, comrades of the Second International. ("*Very true!*" from representatives of Vienna and Moscow.)

POLITICAL PRISONERS.

I hold very similar opinions with regard to the other question which lies near our hearts, the question of *political prisoners*. You will not think, comrades of the Second International, that the treatment of Socialist Parties in Russia is less near to our hearts than yours. Here at our table are sitting comrades who have only recently been released from the prisons of the Soviet Government, and we know very well what persecutions our comrades of the Russian Social Democratic Party and the Left Social Revolutionaries have suffered. And we consider it entirely impossible, incompatible with the idea of the proletarian united front, that full rights of citizenship should not be given to all proletarian and Socialist Parties in Russia. But, comrades, this again is a general question, not only a question for Russia. I will not speak of the infamous persecutions of Communist and other revolutionary workers in Jugo-Slavia, Roumania, Hungary, Poland. It might be said that no Socialist Parties are responsible for them, because none have the power there to hinder it. But there are prisoners also in other lands, where the power of the Socialists and the working class is very considerable, not only in Russia. And if we have to admit that one of the most incomprehensible phenomena in the Soviet policy is this, that at the very moment that their Party had proclaimed the watchword of the united front they began preparations for criminal trials for acts perpetrated four years ago, under totally different circumstances, in a time of open civil war, although they must have known what difficulties this would raise against the realisation of the proletarian united front, still I would remind you that in other lands, too, which have passed through a phase of revolution, there are prisons to-day which hold revolutionary fighters, workers, good comrades, also because of acts committed in a time of open civil war; towards securing amnesty for them too the whole strength of the proletarian Parties should have been directed.

This is one side of the question. The other is, the way in which the moral conditions can be established. We quite agree with our comrades of the Second International on these points: the re-establishment of the right of Georgia to self-determination; the restoration of full freedom in the political and trade union activities of all Socialist Parties in Russia; certainly, these are the moral conditions for the united front, but how are you going to arrive at these conditions? Will you formulate your conditions and expect the other Party to accept them?

ACTION BEFORE GUARANTEES.

I confess that I do not think that is the right way. The united front will be accomplished in quite a different way, and above all the moral conditions will be reached in quite a different way. Let the masses first fight together, whatever their different political convictions may be, then I am convinced that in *this common struggle*, on the common battlefield, the feeling of comradeship and solidarity will develop, until no proletarian Party will allow itself to oppose the fulfilment of these moral conditions. (*Applause from Vienna and Moscow.*) Let the proletariat fight together to-day, while the possibilities exist; then I am convinced that the proletariat will demand everywhere, irrespective of their Party organisation, possibilities for common struggle everywhere.

CAPITALISM TRIUMPHANT.

When are we uttering these conditions? We all know, and I need not dwell upon this fact, the conditions of the world proletariat to-day. We all know the great international offensive of capitalism, which has just advanced in a giant struggle against the English engineers, and which we can see too in every other land. Everywhere we see the system of imperialism disturbing the economy of the whole world.

Certainly, comrades, we of the International Working Union are convinced that France and Belgium have every right to claim compensation for the devastation of which they were victims, after the most terrible crime in the world's history, committed by Austrian diplomacy, the Hungarian gentry, and the Prussian Junker in 1914. But, comrades, we also see how this right of France and Belgium has been abused by a capitalist and imperialist policy, which is trying to turn the whole of Central Europe into a slave-market, the effect of which is to drive the proletariat in other countries out of industry; and then this unemployment is misused not only to force down wages, but for an attack upon the elementary rights of the proletariat, to wrest from the proletariat everything that they have won through their trade unions. And we see how this very imperialism in the small countries, which are defenceless, supports reaction. How can you think that our comrades, the working masses in the new Balkan States, just created in Europe, will understand us when we quarrel over conditions, at a time when, as we see daily, the whole military and economic strength of the victorious military Powers is protecting the interests of the national bourgeoisie; or when, as we see so clearly in Austria, these victorious Powers are eager to wrest the last weapon out of the hands of the proletariat, whilst at the same time in Hungary they are defying all the disarmament decisions of the peace treaty of Trianon and handing over the weapons to the white guards of Horthy and the Magyar Fascisti.

Face to face with these conditions we begin our discussions, at a time when the capitalist Governments are preparing to meet in Genoa for a Conference. Past history has shown us clearly the inability of these Governments to give the world even the necessities of life, and to them the task of economic reconstruction is only an opportunity for a conspiracy on the part of the great nations of Europe such as hitherto only the Bey of Tunis might have attempted.

ACTION POSSIBLE.

We are carrying on our negotiations face to face with these conditions, and to me it seems quite impossible that we should leave this Conference with nothing else to tell the world proletariat but that we could not come to an understanding, because one side had imposed conditions and the other had refused them. In so doing, comrades, I believe we should sadly disappoint the proletariat of every land, whatever Party they may belong to, and at the same time we should encourage the capitalist Governments meeting in Genoa to continue their policy. (*Applause from Vienna and Moscow.*) We consider it imperative that the general Conference which we are trying to arrange here should meet as speedily as possible. And further, we think it desirable, if possible before the Conference, to send out a common appeal to the proletariat asking them to demonstrate their common will with regard to the Genoa Conference. (*"Quite right" from Moscow.*) I am convinced that, however much we may disagree about conditions, we might issue common resolutions on certain big and decisive questions, setting forth our views in opposition to the capitalist conspiracy.

This is what appears necessary to all of us. I should like now to appeal to both sides not to make this impossible. I make a further appeal to the comrades of the Second International. Do not ask the Communists what they want. That may soon change. Every day in Moscow they take up a new position. It is no good speculating, however interesting it may be to do so, as to what our comrades want; ask them what they are going to *do*. That is the important thing. I am quite convinced that, whatever manoeuvres have been planned in Moscow, Radek will not tell you. But it does not matter. I am quite convinced that the actual conditions of the proletariat, their terrible need, the necessity for a defensive struggle against Capitalism, the tragic position of the Soviet Republic, will compel the Communist Inter-

national to abandon any manoeuvres they are contemplating and to fulfil your conditions. I am convinced that action will impose its own conditions and necessities. With regard to the Communist International, I am not such a child as to believe that they will heed my appeal, because it comes from me. I am a traitor, so I read to-day, and have been sent here to represent the interests of the bourgeoisie. That is their way of speaking: we have grown too well accustomed to it to take it amiss. They will not listen to what I say, nor to the Party I represent, nor to the International Working Union; but they know quite well that when I appeal to them to create the necessary conditions *I am only voicing the desires of millions of workers in every country.* Therefore let me say: Do not be surprised at your position. The methods of your struggle, not so much in Russia as against the workers' Parties and Trades Unions in Western and Central Europe, explain the situation clearly enough. And, comrades, you have not made it very easy for us to come to a united front. You may not admit it here publicly, but you cannot deny it if you think it over.

CONDITIONS OF THE SECOND.

I believe that the conditions put by the Second International are such that no one can seriously oppose them. We may differ as to whether the decision to examine the Georgian question can achieve positive results; but I do not think we can oppose the suggestion that the documents of the various sections should be handed over for common investigation. I cannot judge—I do not know the Russian system of justice—whether it is possible for Vandervelde to appear as advocate before the Moscow tribunal, but I presume it will not be an encroachment upon your rights (*addressing the Communists*) to carry out the trial, if it must be carried out, under the control of international Socialism. I believe that if we address an appeal to the comrades of

the Second International, not to issue an ultimatum to you, we must also appeal to you to show by your deeds that you are prepared to place class above party interests.

VIENNA UNION.

I have only one more thing to say on behalf of the Vienna Union: we still hold the position we have taken; we consider the meeting of the Conference necessary; we think it desirable that a practical goal for common action should be proposed here before the Conference meets. All we can do is to appeal to both sides. If either side thinks that we can help in the task of mediation we place our services at your disposal; for our part we are convinced that the need of the proletariat in this hour demands sacrifices from us all. We are convinced that a first step towards common international action, however timid and hesitating it may be, is worth a hundred times more than any utterances about programme and methods.

KARL RADEK.

My answer can be divided into two parts: the answer to Comrade Ramsay MacDonald's speech and the answer to the official declaration of the Second International, which is not in conformity with Comrade MacDonald's speech. Ramsay MacDonald's speech tempts me to discuss it in detail. First, because it is possible to come to an understanding with Ramsay MacDonald without creating any ill feeling; MacDonald's absolute honesty and conviction open the way for peaceful discussions.

THE VERSAILLES TREATY.

MacDonald's speech was a passage, not from the tragedy, but from the tragi-comedy of the proletariat.

When Vandervelde spoke, we heard an echo from Paris. He was in doubt as to whether the Versailles treaty should be put on the agenda, because that might help Stinnes; and we see from the declaration of the Second International that they adhere to the agenda suggested in the Vienna Union's invitation, which means they oppose the inclusion of the question of the Versailles treaty. We shall be very interested to know whether the representatives of the German Social Democracy, who are said to belong to the Second International, and whose declarations I am sorry not to have heard here, agree that in this Conference, which is to consider the position of the international proletariat, including the German proletariat, such an insignificant little matter as the reparations burden of the Versailles treaty should disappear from the agenda. (WELS: *In our International we have repeatedly dealt with the Versailles treaty*.) Because Wels has already dealt with it repeatedly I suppose he has nothing to say with regard to Genoa. (WELS: *That is your logic*.) It is no good entering into a discussion with you: nothing will come out of it. We will return later to a public discussion of this matter.

RAMSAY MACDONALD'S ATTACK.

Now to Ramsay MacDonald. MacDonald, with the conviction characteristic of him, as a Socialist, has hurled accusations against us, and in so doing has unconsciously represented the programme of Lloyd George. All MacDonald's accusations were an echo of the battles of Liberal England for the freedom of small peoples. And Soviet Russia alone in the whole world was the devouring wolf, eating up the little peoples. Comrade Ramsay MacDonald! I have to draw your attention to a few facts. You spoke here not as a representative of the Independent Labour Party, of which you are a member—whose representatives sit here at the table of the Vienna International—but as a representative of the English Labour Party.

ENGLAND AND SMALL STATES.

May I remind you what conditions the English Labour Party attached to the independence of Ireland? They put the condition of the neutralisation of the Irish coast, so that it could never be used as a maritime basis against English imperialism. May I remind you that the Party in whose name you speak stands, with regard to India, not for independence but only for autonomy. These are facts which we make known, not only for the sake of the truth, but specially because there are present here representatives of all sections of the English press. If this is so, let me say to you: "You are for freedom, as you understand it; for freedom as you and the English working class, as accomplices of English imperialism, have learned to think of it, under the pressure of four centuries of English imperialist history." And so MacDonald in his speech, which teemed with all the beautiful things we heard so much of during the war and which were a part of the artillery of British imperialism, overlooked one little point. He has forgotten why this question of little States and nations has arisen. For him only England exists. England always stands for small peoples, unless she has conquered them. But on the other side there is another State, and this other State has devoured poor, innocent Georgia, and still other States have been eaten up too. These are the *Border States*—a phrase very familiar to our ears. In German they are called *Randstaaten*. When German imperialism defeated the Tsarist State, it "freed" the small peoples, the Border States. But England was opposed to this policy. She wanted to protect Riga for Russia, and did actually defend Russia's rights in Poland. Since the death of Tsarism and the existence of the Workers' Republic, the English Government and a section of the English Socialists have taken up the cause of the Border States. Now, comrades, there are diverse opinions with regard to the question of Border States; but anyone can understand the objective meaning of it: it means that England

is to have the disposal of Riga and Batoum, the gates into Russia. That is the history of the Border States, which Ramsay MacDonald wants to make into a Socialist watchword. It is enough to ask MacDonald—you were a member of the Second International before the war: "Why did the Second International never demand the independence of Georgia before the war in the days of Tsarism? Or the independence of the Ukraine? Where were you in the days before the war, when this principle of Socialism was being trodden under foot?"

GEORGIA.

I go still further and ask whether Ramsay MacDonald and the other respected delegates at this Conference know the history of Georgian freedom. As you know, the present champions of this freedom are the Menshevist Government of Georgia, which we overthrew. It consists of men, not one of whom stood for Georgian independence before October, 1917, but who were all Great-Russian patriots. Tseretelli, who struck his name off the list of speakers in order to bring up his great guns later, fought so vigorously for Great-Russia that he took part in the 1918 offensive as minister under Kerenski, and was the only member of the Central Committee of the Russian Soviet to vote for the death penalty against the soldiers because he thought it necessary for the defence of Great-Russia. If Martov were to stand up to-day and denounce us because of death penalties, I should remember that when you, Tseretelli, voted for the death penalty at the front, Martov was amongst those who fought against it. From the moral standpoint, therefore, he has a right to speak on these matters; but surely, Mr. Tseretelli and others have none. And you, who stood first for the independence of Georgia when it was a question of attacking the Workers' Republic, what have you done with your independence? You tried to root out the Bolsheviks with blood and iron. I can read you a declaration made

by your Foreign Minister, Gegetchkori, to General Alexejev at a Conference with the representatives of the White armies of the South: "We have suppressed the Bolsheviks in our country, we have given shelter to your White officers." If you doubt this declaration, we have the collection of documental reports of your Government, which fell into our hands when we took Tiflis. (*Interruption: Are those the secret documents?*) Yes, they are the secret documents.

What about this independence then? On the invitation of the Georgian Government came General von Kress, the famous German "deliverer" of Georgia. I understand the tragedy of your position with regard to the bands of the Turks. But that does not say that Georgia was independent. When you invited the German troops you said: "We cannot stand alone in the world"—and you formed a coalition with the German Government. You went out to meet the German troops, and, together with the German officers, shouted hurrahs in honour of the deliverers, in honour of German imperialism. Then the Germans disappeared, and General Thomson appeared, and with him the much cleverer, more subtle, English occupation. They left their cannons and their army in Batoum. With regard to your rulers, I can read you a passage from the book of your Party leader, Dschugeli, which appeared with an introduction by your Foreign Minister, Gegetchkori, in which he says: "At the command of General Thomson the Social Democratic Party and the Government were to pull down the red flag from the Government House." And Dschugeli goes on to relate that he was opposed to this, and says: "My Party has rejected the red flag (these are his very words), and I reject the decisions of my Party." Now, Georgia was little and weak. Georgia could not remain neutral, and the leader of your Government, Jordania, understood this, and says in a speech which I have here: "We cannot remain neutral, and if we have to choose between Eastern fanaticism and Western civilisation, we decide

in favour of Western civilisation.' Now, Western civilisation is an extraordinarily good thing, Comrade Tseretelli. But to Western civilisation belong, not only beautiful things like the Tiflis democracy, but England considers also the Baku petroleum wells an integral part of Western civilisation. The need for these petroleum wells was very pressing, not only with the petroleum company, behind which stands the English admiralty, but also with the English Government. You know very well that the naphtha question is one of considerable importance, not only for little Georgia, but for the great Russian people and the Russian working class. One of the Vienna International comrades has just called out to me: Beautiful Naphtha Communism! (ABRAMOVICH: *Quite right, Naphtha Communism!*). If Citizen Abramovitch introduces Socialism will he do it without naphtha? (*Merriment.*) Citizen Abramovitch will presumably use the volcano of his indignation and his enthusiasm as fuel and motor power. (*Great merriment.*) But we poor devils have not yet learned to do without naphtha. (ABRAMOVICH: *And so you plunder it!*) You, worthy Comrade Abramovitch, were a member of the Party which tried to introduce Socialism by means of a bourgeois Government. That probably was a better way than the dictatorship of the proletariat. In any case it appears that the desire of the Georgian people for independence is of very recent date.

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION.

All these questions can only be calmly and sensibly discussed if we ask ourselves: What is the present condition of the world? The first wave of the Russian Revolution produced the Russian revolutionary State. You say, it is not a workers' State. The Amsterdam appeal said: If Soviet Russia falls, the reactionary capitalist world will win a great victory over the whole international working class. Even if we are unable to do anything for the accomplishment of Socialism, and can only prevent this State falling a prey to the Whites,

if we only turn the Russian people into a peasant people, who can produce their food in future, if they have peace, if our friend Tom Shaw can stop the English gunboats blockading the European Revolution,—I say, if only these possibilities exist, the only thing necessary for the preservation of the Russian people is a word of command from the international proletariat. (*Bravo!*) I understand the position of the Vienna International. It sits between us and the Second International, it wants to serve the general Conference faithfully, and speaks like God himself, like Justice with her balance distributing exhortations on the right and on the left,—I understand their position, and will not make fun of them. But if you want to prove this question, you must be clear about it yourselves. Do you RECOGNISE THIS STATE AS THE RESULT OF THE FIRST WAVE OF THE REVOLUTION, do you understand its significance for the further struggle of the international proletariat? Then you will understand this State, its internal policy, its relations with the outer world, its zigzags. Are we furthering and facilitating thereby the world revolution? That is the question. If the kind-hearted Ramsay MacDonald comes with all the tracts of the Quakers and all the tracts of the English Liberals in his trunk, without knowing that they are a disguised form of English imperialism, we have not lost our respect for him, but we say: "You are a tool of that English imperialism which rules the world, which has even managed to persuade Germany that it is the protector of Germany."

AN UNDERSTANDING.

Comrades! We shall never come to an understanding over the question of our world philosophy in a Conference. The proletariat of the West will only understand our policy when under the pressure of the hour they make a revolution themselves and stand before the necessity of the consequences. We shall not convince you by propaganda that not every man that

calls himself a Socialist is really one; we shall not convince you by propaganda that not everything which calls itself the right-of-the-peoples-to-self-determination is really such; we shall not bridge over the gulf lying between us by propaganda. During the last year the position in Europe has become very clear. We have seen that the first wave of revolution has passed, the second has not yet rolled up. The working class finds itself for the moment on the defensive. The general Conference proposed by the Vienna Working Union is not to busy itself with these questions, and so we have only touched upon these differences here, differences where there can be no unity, in order to reach a point where there can be unity.

I repeat: When I said to Vandervelde: "Distrust, no confidence", I did not say it for polemical reasons, but I said it because it is well that at the beginning of our action we should know how we stand. We have no confidence in the Parties of the Second International; we cannot feign this confidence. But in spite of this we say: "It is not a question whether we have confidence in one another; the workers demand a common struggle, and we say: let us begin it!"

GOOD FAITH.

Ramsay MacDonald asked us to-day: Are you in favour of the united front, do you come in good faith? He need not have asked that question. He should reflect that, if he believes that we are only carrying out a manoeuvre to win ground, we must be for the united front. For just as far as you fail in the struggle, we shall win ground. But if he thinks that the Second International will fight, then this will disturb our manoeuvre. And why? Through the struggle, through the strengthening of the workers' movement. Even then we shall win, for the workers will fight better against capital. You may think what you like about it, but don't tell us that we don't want to fight. The good faith does not consist in this, that we have forgotten

anything we have said about you, that we will not fight you. The good faith lies in the need of the hour which exists for the proletariat. It is only the question: Is the proletariat uniting in a struggle against all of us who are present here, or against any of the individual Executives? I prefer to think that this need of the hour is uniting the proletariat with the consent of all the Parties dependent on the proletariat. If we can escape the fratricidal strife of the working classes no one will rejoice more than we do. The cleavage was a means to an end, but not the end itself.

Now the concrete conditions. I declare: we are calling a Conference to define our position with regard to the need of the working class and the defensive struggle. You have not raised questions, put conditions for this struggle against capital. You have imposed conditions upon *us*. Now, if you think you can put conditions you make a mistake. But I say to you openly: We will try to see whether, without any Party putting conditions to another, we can come to an agreement over the minimum that may be possible.

NOYAUTAGE.

I will refer to your demands in turn. The first is the renunciation of cell-tactics. I thought at first it was a question of the refusal of the demands from the cells of Moabit or Boutyrki. (*Laughter*.) We are quite willing to discuss this. It is a question of other cells, however, and as the representatives of the English Party in particular do not like studying the documents of other Parties, they think these cells are some kind of animal, or gas, which will poison the Second International.

What are cell-tactics? We expressed our opinion on the Trade Union question at the second Conference of the Communist International. WE DECLARED AGAINST ANY ACCENTUATION OF THE SPLIT IN THE TRADE UNIONS. This led to the secession of a section of our comrades. The so-called Left Communists left the Communist International for this reason, because they said:

"Splitting of the Trade Unions, the formation of new Unions." But we say to you: If you ask us to give up the struggle against Reformism we shall answer flatly: "No." Your Reformist tactics have brought the English Trade Unions to such a pass that a member of the English Trade Unions writes: "The English Trade Unions are absolutely pumped out, and they are also spiritually pumped out." We will fight against Reformism in the Trade Unions, so long as we exist. For this fight you say we are building cells. I ask the members of the Social Democratic Party: I ask the German Trade Unions, at the time of the elections, did you not also put up separate lists? So did the comrades of the U.S.P. in Germany. We decided against splitting the Trade Unions, not for love of you, but because we knew very well that such tactics would affect the strength of the whole working class. These are the explanations which I think I ought to make here on this question of cell-tactics.

I might say one thing more. Ramsay MacDonald is a democrat, and Tom Shaw is quite certainly also a democrat. (Tom Shaw: *That is sure!*) For they are all honourable people and democrats, as Shakespeare said. (*Laughter.*) Now, I ask you, honoured Comrade Tom Shaw, how dare you as a comrade demand that the Communists in the English Trade Unions, which are still democratic Party institutions, should be refused admission to fight for their ideas? If they wanted to lay bombs on the table of your Trade Union offices—I would sympathise, and would not ask that they should be allowed to run about for this purpose and receive an order from the Third International. But when it is a question of free spiritual combat in the Trade Unions, how have you, the Democrat, the courage to demand that the Communist workers, and only the Communist workers, shall be prevented from working as a section among their comrades in support of their convictions, provided they submit to the discipline of the Trade Unions and show a spirit of solidarity in the Trade

Union struggle? How can you have the courage to demand it? You will not be able to answer this. "Liberty" can be distorted like a wax nose when it is a question of turning it against revolutionary workers. But in this case it will break.

GEORGIA.

The second question presented is the question of the nomination of a commission of delegates of the three Executives for the examination of the question of Georgia and the other States in similar circumstances, for the purpose of reaching an agreement among Socialist Parties. We agree to this condition, which is not a condition. For before I read it I had referred in my speech to the examination of documents by a commission. Only I would like to ask, whether in "similar circumstances" the attitude of the Labour Party towards the Egyptian question, the Irish question, and the Indian question ought not to be examined. If you propose special tribunals and special commissions to be directed against the first State of the Revolution, you who have not the courage to compel the English Government to imprison a murderer like your General Dyer, if you demand special tribunals and special commissions to examine the internal affairs of Russia, I will say to you: my respect for you, Comrade MacDonald—I repeat it for the third time—is very great; but do not put too great a strain upon our faith in the naïveté of mankind!

PRISONERS.

Now to the third demand, the demand for the liberation of the prisoners who are in prison for their political deeds, and an undertaking that those who are condemned for criminal action shall be allowed rights of defence and a trial under the control of International Socialism. We are very wild people, but the accused have the right to choose the defence they want. I have heard that Citizen Vandervelde would like to plead their

cause before the revolutionary tribunal in Moscow. I know he is prompted by only noble feelings. He was the member of an allied Government in Versailles, who, although we had agreed to go to Prinkipo, concluded the offensive against us. He was a member of a Government which said to Russia, when she lay bleeding and exhausted on the ground, "Jusqu'au bout !" He feels that he shares the guilt of the Social Revolutionaries, and he says : "If these poor people are to be judged, I cannot allow the Russian Government to exercise their right to put me on the prisoner's bench—my spirit of self-sacrifice does not go quite so far—but I will defend my accomplices !" It is a noble feeling ! And as far as our delegation from the Communist International is concerned, we can promise that we cordially accept the suggestion that you should be granted the right to appear as lawyer for the defence. We will try to put a lawyer beside you who, with you, in the name of the Communist International, will try you and the Social Revolutionaries for your past deeds and everything which has driven people to commit outrages. (MARTOV : *You call this a court !*) Then I ask you : What kind of court is this "control of international socialism" ? What is it, please ? (MARTOV : *Inspection of documents !*)

If that was the official meaning of the Second International—I do not think you speak in their name—then we can satisfy you by allowing you to take as many stenographic reports as you like, and to examine all documents and letters. But what is this control of international socialism ? I cannot yet fathom the secrets of the hearts of the Second International. Do they want to set up a superior court of the Second International or of the three Internationals in Russia ? Since when has Russia been a protectorate of the Second International ? I only heard at one of the sessions of this conference, from citizen Vandervelde, that the Social Revolutionaries, although they wanted to belong to the Two-and-a-Half, had placed themselves under the protection of the Second. But that the Communist

Party of Russia or the Communist Government of Russia had ever begged for this protection, or that it had been granted them, that I have never heard. Comrades ! Here the Second International demands certain explanations. Martov has an interpretation ; from the members of the Second International I hear different interpretations. We are willing to wait for the authentic interpretation of the Bible, so that we can then adopt a definite attitude towards the question. I repeat again : we accept no conditions, we are ready to do everything possible to facilitate the international workers' congress. (*Interruption : The twenty-one conditions !*) We never asked you, sir, to accept the twenty-one points. (ADOLF BRAUN : *It was I who said it.*) That was Adolf Braun ! If you had subscribed to them, you would not have been able to carry them out.

A UNITED FRONT.

We are not concerned at this moment with further polemics and aggravation of the present situation. My concern is, whether we can get over all these difficulties and come to the congress or not. Comrade Bauer proposed to-day that this Conference should not break up without calling upon the proletariat to make common demonstrations against the Genoa Conference, which is a new attempt at plunder and not at reconstruction. We entirely support this suggestion of Bauer's. But abysms still divide us. The question is : How are we to get over them ? The proletariat will not be united behind this table, where we are making declarations and are uttering recriminations for the past and mistrust for the future. The struggle of the proletariat will decide the question of the united front, and you may abuse the Communist International as much as you like —(*Interruption : You understand how to do that pretty well yourself*)—and for one robber I will always give you two-and-a-half, I do not advise you to begin this story over again. One thing remains : The will to fight on the part of that section of the proletariat which supports the

Communist International to-day. A thousand times they have misjudged the length of the road; but they were always there when it was a question of fighting for the interests of their class comrades. *Therefore we stand for the united front of the proletariat without conditions.*

THIRD DAY.

Wednesday, the 5th April, 1922.

FINAL SESSION.

The session, which was originally to have met at 3 o'clock, then postponed until 5, then until 6 o'clock, opened finally at a quarter to twelve at night, under the presidency of Friedrich Adler.

THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF NINE.

FRIEDRICH ADLER.

The meeting is open, Comrades! In the name of the three delegations present at this Conference and their representatives on the Committee of Nine, I have to report to you the result of their work. The work accomplished during these days which we have spent together here in Berlin has been exceedingly difficult, and there is no reason why we should hide from you the fact that again and again our attempts were nearly wrecked. We have no reason for concealing from the proletariat or from the bourgeoisie that the difficulties and opposition which existed between the representatives of the Three Executives were very real. But, comrades, although I shall have to describe these difficulties in further detail, we can say at once that we have in the end reached an agreement such as we had dared not hope for at the beginning of the proceedings. (*Bravo!*) We can say that, after years during which it has been impossible even to meet in common debate, we have at last succeeded in passing a common resolution of the Executives.

AGREEMENT.

Each of the three Executives has put on one side its own special views with regard to certain paragraphs in

the resolution, and its wishes with regard to the insertion of further points, and the representatives of all three Executives will set forth in a protocol separate declarations on such points. These protocols will be published in order to give the whole proletariat a chance of understanding existing differences.

But, comrades, in spite of these differences, we have, after long and troublesome deliberations, arrived at a resolution which will express the common will of all three Executives; and we believe that, however modest our achievements may be, compared with what we might have wished, we have laid the foundations for the re-establishment of the united front and come a step nearer to the great goal. During the days that we have spent here in Berlin, the bourgeois press has been saying joyfully: The Conference will be wrecked, it will be impossible; but to-day we can say that in spite of all our differences, we have shown that we share the common will to gather together the strength of the proletariat for action, to make this action possible, and to create the necessary conditions.

THE NEGOTIATIONS.

Comrades! While I am putting before you the results of our deliberations, I will also explain to you quite frankly the course of proceedings during the last days. Everyone present has followed the debates up to the open session yesterday evening, and I will now tell you what has been done to-day. You know how, in the two long sessions, the very divergent points of view of the different sections were expressed very clearly. We believe that these debates, however strongly differences appeared in them, have been useful; for now these things have been spoken out face to face as they had to be.

Comrades! To-day we were faced with the question: Are these debates to drag on for ever? A great deal was left to be said on all sides: a great deal is to be included in the protocols which would have been expressed publicly if the Conference had allowed the time. We said:

We have had enough preliminary discussions; we want to try and get at the root of the matter where we can find some common ground. Early this morning the Second International met and after a long debate passed a resolution. I want to give you the true history of the proceedings, because it is very important that all comrades should understand them. There were two proposals, the proposal of the Second International, and one which I put before the Executives of the three Internationals this morning—on my own responsibility, because I could not get into communication beforehand with my friends of the Working Union. In this way the Second International was able to consider this proposal at their meeting this morning. In the course of the afternoon this draft resolution underwent many changes and modifications. But—and the Comrades of the Second International consider this point important—when they passed their resolution in the morning they already knew of the proposal I had put before the three Internationals. Knowing this, they passed the following resolution, which I will read to you, in order to make the whole thing clear:—

DECLARATION OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL.

The Executive Committee of the Second International, whilst accepting the principle of a General Conference as soon as a common ground of action can be found, is, however, convinced that a desirable conclusion can only be reached when the Third International abandons the tactics of the formation of “*nuclei*” and the splitting of the Trades Union movement, when they accept and show respect for the principle of self-determination of nations wherever they are in power, and when they respect the right of freedom of opinion for others.

Therefore, the Executive Committee of the Second International insists upon a written and precise answer being given by the Third International to the three conditions which have been put before them. It agrees that

the reply should be addressed to the Committee of Nine (three representatives from each Executive Committee), which will consider the replies, and remain in contact with the object of eliminating the differences which exist, and preparing the convocation of a General Conference.

I would also add that the Second International accepted this morning the proposal contained in my draft resolution that the Committee of Nine which has carried on the organisation of our proceedings should continue to function and be entrusted with the work of eliminating existing differences.

This resolution passed by the Second International was presented by Comrade Vandervelde to the Committee of Nine at the beginning of the morning session. A discussion followed, and after a short adjournment the representatives of the Third International declared that in view of the standpoint adopted by the Second International, they considered the negotiations had broken down, and wanted to pass a resolution explaining publicly to the proletariat the reason for the disruption.

I will not pursue the details of the negotiations which followed. We did not see the text of this declaration from the Third International, because we were able to spin new threads which led to fresh negotiations on the basis of the declaration which I had submitted to the three Executives. These negotiations, which were very lengthy—as you have all seen—at last ended successfully, and the three Executives agreed upon a common declaration. I will afterwards read this declaration.

THE THREE QUESTIONS.

I have to draw attention to the fact that the three questions put to the Third International in Vandervelde's first speech in the open Conference, and which Radek dealt with in his answer during yesterday's debate, were raised again in the resolution of the Second International. These three questions have also played a part in the negotiations of the Committee of Nine. It was

made known that Comrade Radek had said, in the name of his friends, that he was prepared, at any time, even to-day, to give a written answer to these questions if he received them in a definite form. It was agreed, however, that, in accordance with the resolution of the Second International, these questions, which involve other issues, should be referred to the Committee of Nine for subsequent investigation. Upon this point there was a general agreement. (RADEK : *That is not entirely correct; I would like to point out a mis-statement!*) Perhaps you could make your explanation now, Comrade Radek; we will wait a moment. (RADEK : *I want to say that the answers were not given, because Vandervelde refused to put the questions in a definite form, and that the general conference has nothing to do with questions not put in such a form.*)

Comrades ! I have tried to sum up as objectively as possible, stating that these debates actually took place. As I said, Radek declared that he was prepared to answer, and Vandervelde said : These questions need not be settled now when we are pressed for time, but it is the work of the future to put them and answer them. And I can also say that Vandervelde hopes, in view of the line taken in the debate, that they will be settled much more easily than at first seemed probable. Am I right in saying this ? (RADEK : *Quite right.*)

Now I will read the text of this common declaration :—

TEXT OF AGREEMENT.

“The Conference is agreed that, however desirable the unity of the class-conscious organisations of the proletariat may be, at the present moment the only thing that can be done is to hold deliberations between all the sections represented at the Conference for the purpose of common action towards a concrete goal. The Conference, therefore, proposes that the Executives should agree to the setting up of an Organisation Committee of Nine, which shall undertake preparations for further conferences

of the three Executives, as well as conferences on a wider basis, to include parties which are not affiliated to either of the three International organisations. Each Executive is free to appoint as it thinks fit the three representatives to whom it is entitled. In this Organisation Committee no majority resolutions will be allowed, its task will be to express the general point of view of the three Executives as far as this is declared.

"The Conference recommends that this Organisation Committee should try to bring about conversations between the representatives of the Amsterdam Trade Union International and the Red Trade Union International, to consider the question of how the maintenance and restoration of Trade Union unity of front can be secured, nationally and internationally.

"The Conference notes the declaration of the representatives of the Communist International that the forty-seven Social-Revolutionaries who are to be tried will be allowed any defenders they wish; that, as already announced in the Soviet press before the Conference, no death sentences will be inflicted in this trial; that, as the trial will be public, representatives of all three Executives will be allowed to attend, to listen to the proceedings, and will be allowed to take stenographic reports for the information of their affiliated Parties.

"The Conference declares that all the three Executives have expressed their readiness to collect and examine the material to be submitted by the different sections on the question of Georgia. The Conference authorises the Committee of Organisation to draw conclusions from this examination, and to present a report to a later Conference of the three Executives.

"The Conference notes that the representatives of the Second International have declared that they do not consider it possible to hold a general con-

ference in April, that is to say, at the same time as the Genoa Conference. The Conference, however, agrees in principle upon the necessity for calling a general conference as soon as possible. The Executives undertake to inform their affiliated Parties of the progress which the idea of a general conference has made during the Berlin negotiations, and they will give their representatives on the Committee of Organisation full power to conclude favourable negotiations for the calling of a general conference.

"As the organisation of the general Conference is impossible this month for the reasons above stated, the present Conference declares that it is an imperative duty, in view of the advance of international imperialist capitalism to demonstrate the united will of the international class-conscious proletariat. The Conference, therefore, calls upon the workers of every country to organise great mass demonstrations, with as much unity as possible, during the Genoa Conference, either on the 20th of April, or, where this is technically impossible, on the first of May:—

"For the eight-hour day.

"For the struggle against unemployment, which has increased immeasurably on account of the reparations policy of the capitalist powers.

"For the united action of the proletariat against the capitalist offensive.

"For the Russian revolution, for starving Russia, for the resumption by all countries of political and economic relations with Russia.

"For the re-establishment of the proletarian united front in every country and in the International."

IMMEDIATE ACTION.

Comrades! That is the common ground discovered by the three Executives. You see that an understanding

in a positive direction is much more possible than it was when this Conference first met. We called this Conference to discuss the technical conditions for a general conference, so that we might continue our debates on a wider scale in the next general conference. We have succeeded in finding a definite basis for them. We all agree upon this. Although we know that the general conference has had to be postponed, still we hope that after this first step has been made further steps will also be possible. As a sign that we have not only passed a pious resolution, but have really taken the first step towards the united proletarian front, we have in particular agreed in this spirit to immediate action, to unite as the class-conscious world-proletariat in demonstrations against the union of imperialist capitalism now become evident at Genoa. We have issued from the joint conference of the three Executives a common appeal for common action and demonstrations. It is a tiny beginning of common action; but it is a beginning. Comrades! After we have taken this step forward, we think we can say to you that we know all the difficulties still in front of us, the extent of which we do not underestimate, and knowing them still want to continue our work energetically and cheerfully, in order to reach the common goal we are all striving after, the binding together of the forces of the international proletariat in a struggle against world capitalism.

Comrades! If you are all agreed and raise no objections, I declare that this common document of the three Internationals is accepted. (*Applause.*)

Declarations were then handed in by Wels on behalf of the German Social Democratic Party, Tseretelli on behalf of the Georgian Socialist Party, and Grimm on behalf of the International Working Union, the text of which appears in the appendix.

been, and however much self-restraint it has demanded from all of us, we have carried it out in the consciousness that we were serving the cause of the proletariat. If we see the hope before us of uniting the forces of the proletariat in a greater measure than ever before, it is with the knowledge that we have a difficult and a great task before us. We know, Comrades, that the great battles of the proletariat are easier to carry on, because of the impetus they bring with them, than the daily, wearisome work such as we have had to do at this Conference. We will pursue our task to the end, and I think we can to-day, for the first time, after a period during which we have had no impulse towards international organisation, and during which, to the great joy of the bourgeoisie in every country, the proletariat has been divided, again join in the common cry: *Long live the struggling, victorious International of the revolutionary proletariat! (Loud and prolonged cheers. All present sign the International.)*

(End of the Session, 12 midnight.)

We have now come, Comrades, to the end of our discussions. I think that, however difficult the work has

APPENDIX I.

DECLARATION OF THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL.

After much hesitation, the delegation of the Executive of the Communist International has resolved to agree to the joint declaration submitted by the Vienna Union. Their hesitation was due primarily to the fact that the Second International refused to adopt as the watchword for the workers' demonstrations the annulling of the Versailles Treaty. In this respect a great international meeting of workers has shown itself far behind intelligent Western European Liberals. This leads us to believe that the Second International is not really willing to fight against the danger of a fresh Versailles Peace at Genoa, that it is not really prepared to use every weapon against the capitalist offensive.

The delegation of the Executive of the Communist International has, nevertheless, resolved to agree to the joint resolution, although the attempt to convoke an International Labour Conference during the Genoa Conference has failed, owing to the opposition of the Second International.

In spite of these serious considerations, the delegation of the Executive of the Communist International has agreed to the resolution, because of its desire to further, and not to obstruct, the slightest advance in the direction of the united front. For this reason it has renounced at this preliminary conference the demand for an enquiry into the murder of Rosa Luxembourg, Liebknecht, Jogiche, and Levine, and other events which took place during the civil war in Germany. For this reason it has forborne, at this preliminary conference, to throw light upon the part played by the Social Democratic Parties

in the persecution of the Communists in Latvia, Poland, Jugo-Slavia, and Hungary, and reserves the right to demand from the Committee of Nine the appointment of a commission of enquiry into these and similar cases. For this reason it has forborne, at this preliminary conference, to demand from the German Social Democratic Party the release of the proletarian militants in Germany. For this reason, too, it has forborne, at this preliminary conference, to demand an inquiry into the attitude of the Labour Party towards Ireland and the Colonies, and reserves to itself the right to raise all these questions later on. For it is convinced that unless there is a break with the policy of coalition with the bourgeoisie, which is at the root of all this trouble, a real united front of the working class will be impossible.

The delegation of the Executive of the Communist International has resolved to agree to the joint declaration, and to the first feeble steps towards the united front expressed in it, in the firm conviction that the pressure of events will compel the working masses to battle, and will teach them to force their reformist leaders to change their policy if they do not wish to be set on one side by the working classes.

APPENDIX II.

DECLARATION OF THE GERMAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (WELS).

In the name of the German section of the Second International I have to make the following declaration :

The representative of the Moscow Executive Committee, Karl Radek, in his reply on Sunday to the speech of Vandervelde, for lack of a better argument, tried to answer the very serious and urgent question of the fate of the accused Social Revolutionaries with phrases which bore all the marks of a manoeuvre, calculated to confuse the issues. Amongst other things he introduced into the debate the subject of the murder of Rosa Luxembourg and Karl Liebknecht, an abominable and unauthorised deed perpetrated by a body of blood-thirsty soldiers, deplored by all Socialists in Germany. To draw such a parallel between a cowardly crime committed during a paroxysm of civil war and street fighting and the approaching trial of the leaders of the Russian proletariat by order of the Bolshevik Government before a special tribunal does not speak well for the consciences of the representatives of the Third International. But if there is anyone who has less right than another to refer to the tragic events of January, 1919, in Berlin, it is Karl Radek himself. It was he who came, in opposition to the wishes of the Joint Council (Social-Democratic Independent) of People's Commissaries, to renew an attempt which had been made successfully in Russia the year before; the attempt, namely, of an audacious but tiny minority of the proletariat to snatch from the majority of the German people the freedom they had recently won, and to impose upon them the so-called dictatorship of the proletariat, in reality the autocracy of a small group of Communist leaders.

This wild attempt, embodying a foolhardy policy,

both as regards internal and external affairs, was made under the spiritual leadership of Karl Radek, in opposition to Rosa Luxembourg and Karl Liebknecht, as has since been proved. We, the Social Democratic Party of Germany, opposed it; attacked unawares, in the first days we were protected only by a human wall of our unarmed followers, the Social Democratic workers of Berlin, who had lined up in front of the Imperial Chancery. In our ranks, too, a number of workers fell under the bullets and bombs of armed Communist bands. We do not hear of *these* victims of the civil war, of *these* martyrs of the proletariat, as if their lives were worth less than the lives of those who attacked us.

No blurring of history, no bold speeches, no invective, can destroy the real facts: we did not want civil war, it was forced upon us by the Spartacists who were following the example of the Bolsheviks.

In this connection and in view of the allusions made by Radek, we seize the opportunity of the present Conference, to say to the representatives of the world proletariat assembled here: Yes, we suppressed the attempt made at that time to strangle Republican democracy, to prevent the elections to the German Constituent Assembly, to set up the dictatorship of a tiny body of people, all of whom were by no means acting from ideal motives. We accept the responsibility, and we do so with pride before the German people, before the international working class and before history! We know that the international proletariat, if it has not already learned the lesson from the example of Hungary and Bavaria, will in the end recognise that it was we who, by our determined resistance, our courage in face of unpopularity, saved the German Democratic Republic in the early days of its existence from militarist reaction, from a German Horthy.

In particular, we will suffer gladly the abuse of Radek, knowing very well that even those who blame us to-day will be grateful to us as soon as their last Bolshevik illusions have fled.

The same applies to his allusions to the victims of the March Putsch in Central Germany in 1921. But here a single word suffices; a single name: Eberlein, to unveil the audacity of the Communists' reproaches. Those who work together with people who have shown such a cynical disregard for the lives and happiness of their own class-comrades, even their own Party-comrades, as the famous Zetkin documents have revealed, have forfeited the right to appear as accusers.

However immoral and horrible may be the proposal, which amounts to blackmail, for an exchange between the Social Revolutionaries and the Communists of Central Germany, it does not lack a certain symbolic meaning: for both are *your* victims, the victims of the Moscow International!

APPENDIX III.

TSERETELLI'S DECLARATION ON BEHALF OF THE GEORGIAN SOCIALISTS.

Since the debate is not to be continued, in view of the agreement reached, I would like to present the following declaration as a protocol:—

In Radek's speech, the Bolsheviks have confessed publicly, for the first time, that they violated the peace treaty with Georgia and occupied this country by military force. They have given as the reason for this occupation the necessity for Russia to secure access to the naphtha regions.

There are two ways in which a country may satisfy its needs with regard to the economic resources and products of another country: the *imperialist* method, which consists in employing military force, and the *democratic* method, which reaches the desired end by means of a friendly agreement on the basis of mutual interests.

I contend that the Bolsheviks, according to their own confession, chose the first, the imperialist method; and that, in order to gain their economic ends, they violated a country governed by Socialists.

I seize this opportunity to emphasise the fact that the Socialist Government of Georgia has always been ready, and always will be ready, if it is restored, to take into account as widely as possible the economic needs of Russia, and to conclude with the Russian Government any necessary treaties to safeguard the economic interests of Russia.

The Soviet Government knew, and still knows, this fact, which destroys any shadow of justification which might lie in the military occupation of Georgia, an occupation which took place in spite of the peace treaty with Russia.

J. TSERETELLI.

BERLIN, 5th April, 1922.

APPENDIX IV.

DECLARATION OF THE I.A.S.P. (INTERNATIONAL WORKING UNION).

The Executive of the International Working Union wanted to insert the following passage in the general declaration of the three Executives :—

“The Conference declares that it is the duty of proletarian Parties to work energetically for the immediate release of all political prisoners in their own countries, particularly those who were tried or condemned during a time of open civil war.”

The delegates of the Communist International said they could not agree to this passage. In order that the work of the general Conference should not be wrecked on account of this difference of opinion, the International Working Union was compelled to omit this passage from the general declaration, and they note here that the Communist International considered of such importance the further detention of Socialist prisoners in Russia that they were prepared to abandon their struggle for the freedom of the proletarian political prisoners languishing in capitalist State prisons.

The Executive of the Second International is in complete agreement with this declaration of the International Working Union.

On behalf of the Executive Committee of the
International Working Union,
ROBERT GRIMM,
JEAN LONGUET.

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